the Weekly Standard

JULY 26, 1999

$3.95

PBS'S MASSAGE PARLOR
BERNADETTE MALONE

Great Athletes

...and the blowhards who exploit them

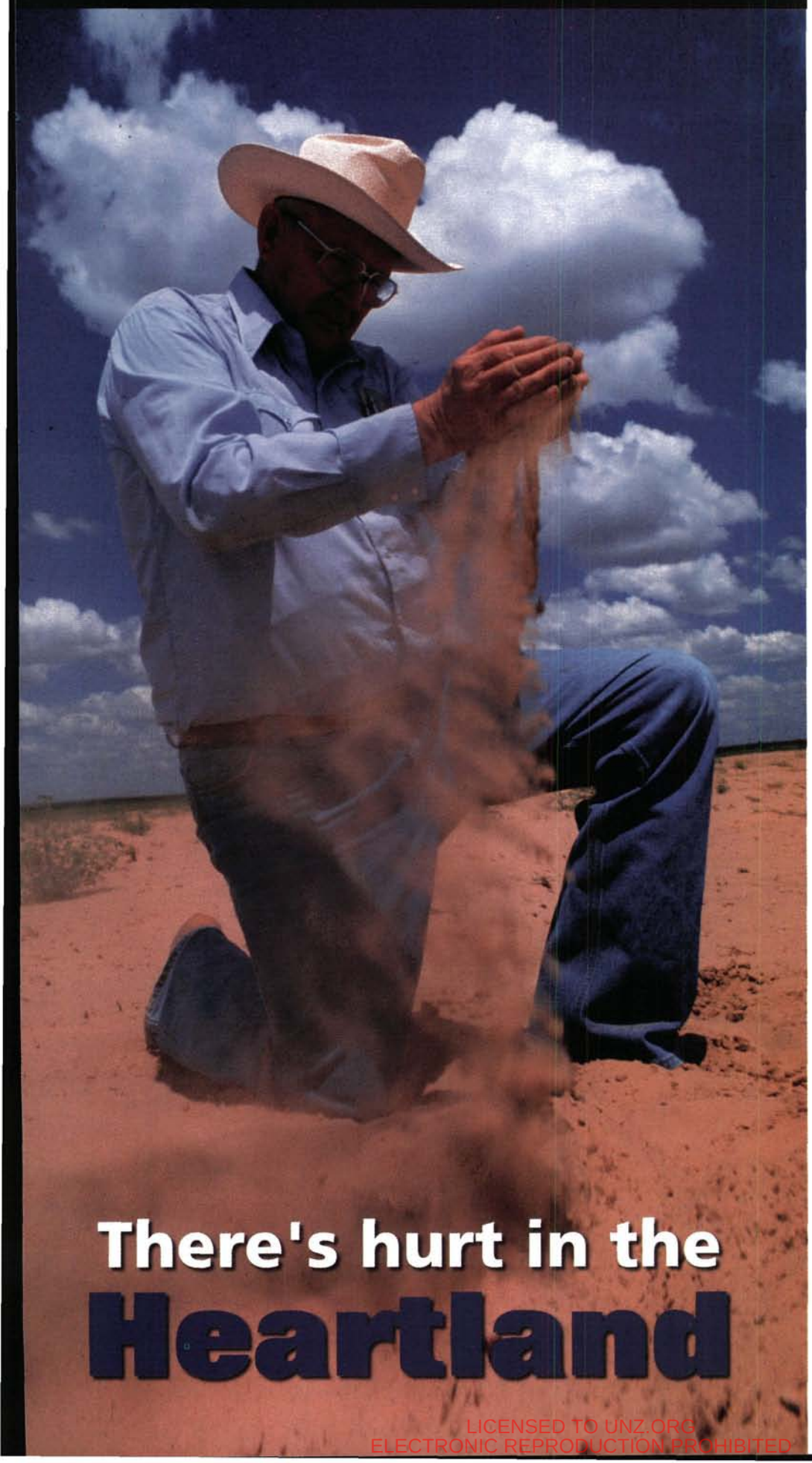
FRED BARNES
Sometimes a game is just a game

DAVID TELL
The myth of Title IX

#BXNFMUD ****** 5-DIGIT 94301
#UNZ0555B096 1#302604 WK 003939
RON UNZ SEP 11 00 000029
371 BALN 000274
555 BRYANT ST 001
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Electricity price increases menace rural america."



There's hurt in the heartland. Successive climatic catastrophes. Collapsed commodity prices. Farm programs in transition. It hasn't been this bad in a generation. Rural Americans–especially farm families–can't shoulder another jolt.

But another jolt is about to hit rural America–

SOARING ELECTRICITY PRICES.

If Congress errors by enacting "Washington Knows Best" electricity rate restructuring, the shock of electricity price jumps is inevitable, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

According to a U.S.D.A. internal staff study, nineteen of America's most rural states will experience electricity price increases... slower economic growth... and fewer jobs if Congress proceeds with a scheme to nationalize the electricity marketplace.

Congress should stand down when it comes to electricity rate restructuring. **There's too much hurt in the heartland.**

EUSA
Electric Utility Shareholders Alliance

P.O. Box 104595
Jefferson City, MO 65110-4595

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 42 • JULY 26, 1999

2 SCRAPBOOK

4 CASUAL
Matt Labash, no more an also-ran.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

11 EDITORIAL
Free Taiwan

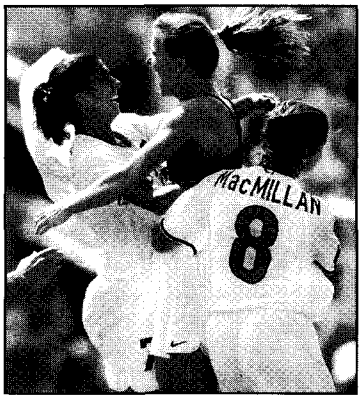
14 PBS'S MASSAGE PARLOR
Your dollars at work. *by* **Bernadette Malone**

15 MR. SMITH GOES THIRD PARTY
Bob Smith's an independent man. *by* **Tucker Carlson**

17 THE TERRORIST NEXT DOOR
. . . and her liberal defenders. *by* **Elliot C. Rothenberg**

18 BILL CLINTON, HISTORIAN
Our revisionist-in-chief. *by* **Peter Wehner**

40 PARODY
Pedro Martinez, a true all-star.



Cover photo: AP/Wide World Photos

22 SOMETIMES A GAME IS JUST A GAME
Feminist commentators make fools of themselves. *by* **Fred Barnes**

24 THE MYTH OF TITLE IX
It's irrelevant to the World Cup victory, and now threatens men's sports. *by* **David Tell**

27 THIRTY YEARS OF INEPTITUDE
Time to rescue space exploration from NASA. *by* **Robert G. Oler, Richard Kolker, & Mark Whittington**

Books & Arts

31 APOCALYPSE NOW? The political vision of Alasdair MacIntyre. *by* **Adam Wolfson**

35 THE MIND OF A FOUNDER An attempt to make sense of James Madison. *by* **Gary Schmitt**

37 CROSSOVER STRIPS Changing places on the comics page. *by* **Michael Taube**

38 HORROR SHOWS The new genre of gross-out movie comedies. *by* **John Podhoretz**

William Kristol, *Editor and Publisher* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **David Brooks, Andrew Ferguson,** *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler,** *Managing Editors*
J. Bottum, *Books & Arts Editor* **Christopher Caldwell,** *Senior Writer* **Victorino Matus, David Skinner,** *Associate Editors*
Tucker Carlson, Matt Labash, Matthew Rees, *Staff Writers* **Kent Bain,** *Art Director*
Katherine Rybak, *Assistant Art Director* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Reporter* **Lee Bockhorn,** *Editorial Assistant*
John J. Dilulio Jr., Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Brit Hume,
Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
David H. Bass, *Deputy Publisher* **Jennifer L. Felten,** *Business Manager*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising & Marketing Manager* **John L. Mackall,** *Advertising Sales Manager* **Lauren C. Trotta,** *Circulation Director*
Doris Ridley, Carolyn Wimmer, *Executive Assistants* **Sarah Keech, Adam Langley, Ian Slatter, Catherine Titus,** *Staff Assistants*

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in April, the second week in July, the last week in August, and the first week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.50. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Weekly Standard Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354. Copyright 1999, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Call Him George Fired'ya Bush

It wasn't a Clintonesque whopper, but when George W. Bush declared last week that spokesman David Beckwith hadn't been fired—well, it wasn't the truth either. On July 12, Bush campaign manager Joe Allbaugh and press secretary Karen Hughes informed Beckwith he should clear out of Bush headquarters by the end of the day. They offered him no alternative, no other job in the campaign he might take.

Why the bum's rush? They told Beckwith he'd put out misinformation, cooperated on a *U.S. News* story that suggested Bush is thickheaded ("Is It Wrong to Call Him George Dumbya Bush?"), mocked the Iowa GOP straw poll on August 14, and generally been "off-message." These charges, basically trivial or untrue, weren't the real reason. Beckwith was canned chiefly because he has a friendly relationship with political reporters in Washington. He was a longtime correspondent in D.C. for *Time*, then served as Vice President Dan Quayle's press secretary.

Normally, such experience might be regarded as an asset. Having a press spokesman who is taken seriously by reporters, and not automatically dismissed as a spinner, can come in handy in politics. But not at Bush campaign headquarters, where paranoia about Beltway mores and sinister national (as opposed to Texas) reporters runs rampant. Some Bush aides talk boastfully about their refusal to play "Washington games." Which is fine, except there's no way around dealing with Washington reporters. And Beckwith did that better than anyone else at the Bush campaign.

Hughes had never wanted Beckwith to be hired in the first place. She is part of Bush's "iron triangle" along with Allbaugh and chief strategist Karl Rove, and she had ruled the Bush press operation, keeping a tight hold on what information is put out. She's been known to complain that Rove himself talks too much to reporters. But Rove, who had worked with Beckwith on the successful—and tough—1993 Senate primary campaign of Kay Bailey Hutchison, insisted that he be brought on board.

Beckwith came on in a subordinate position to Hughes, and always deferred to her in explaining his role to reporters. But Hughes was unhappy with him and last week got her way.

Beckwith's loyalty to Bush was never in doubt. He'd quit his job at EDS in Washington, arranged for his two daughters to attend schools in Texas this fall, packed up his family, and moved to Austin earlier this summer. Nonetheless, Bush operatives trashed him on background after he departed. Oh, yes. There's one Bush campaign person who at least pretends to be chummier with Washington reporters then even Beckwith. That's Bush himself. But you can't fire him.

Abe, We Hardly Knew Ye

Both Jesse "The Body" Ventura and Bob "The Comb-over" Smith demonstrated last week that despite their feisty independence and enervating candor, neither is in danger of being mistaken for Arthur "The Historian" Schlesinger.

Jesse, with his wheels cranking even slower than usual, tried to score rhetorical points for the Reform party while talking with Wolf Blitzer: "It's interesting that when Abraham Lincoln was elected president 150 years ago or more, there were three parties back then, and the Repulican party was the new party on the block." Point taken, Jesse, except for one problem—150 years ago would have been 1849. Lincoln was elected in 1860.

As presidential candidate Bob Smith cast adrift from the Republican party last week, he, like Jesse, let fly with the Lincoln scholarship. "In 1866," Smith said on the Senate floor, "Abraham Lincoln said this—it's a very famous quote: 'If I were to try to read, much less answer all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how—the very best I can. And I'm going to keep right on doing so until the end.'" And Abe did it to the end, too. Except the end came in 1865, which would have made it somewhat difficult to talk about in 1866.

Papa's Got a Brand New Toy

A fellow who talks non-stop is liable to get lost in the thickets of his own verbiage once in a while, and sure enough it happened to President Clinton again last week. At a fund-raising dinner in Coral Gables on Tuesday, our leader expressed his delight at the impending

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

visit of Israeli Prime Minister Barak. "I'm as eager as a kid with a new toy," the president exulted.

Some Israelis took offense. At a joint press conference with Barak two days later, the president was asked by an indignant Israeli reporter: "What kind of game do you want to play with Mr. Barak?" The president seemed not to understand the implication, and it took the intercession of ever-helpful CNN White House correspondent Wolf Blitzer to explain what the reporter meant. Immediately the president took a deep breath and embarked on one of those self-exculpatory soliloquies for which he's famous.

"In English, what that means is that you are very excited. It has no reference to the prime minister. I would never do that. [Ever!] For example, if I were taking a trip to Hawaii, I might say 'I am excited as a kid with a new toy.' It doesn't mean I think Hawaii is a toy [Of course not!], if you see what I mean [We do! We do!]. It means that [Yes?], it's a slogan [Of course!], you know, in the way, in American English it means, 'I am very excited about the prospect of the rejuvenation of the peace process,' [It does?] and that's all it means. I would never say such a patronizing thing. Ever. [Never!] So thank you, Wolf." And thank you, Mr. President.

What's a Comp-Con?

But sometimes, of course, the president gets it just right. Speaking to a meeting of the Democratic Leadership Council in Baltimore last Wednesday, the president assayed the governing philosophy of the Republican front-runner.

"This compassionate conservatism has a great ring to it, you know? It sounds so good, and I've really worked hard to try to figure out what it means. I mean, I made an honest effort. And near as I can tell, here's what it means. It means, 'I like you. I do. And I would like to be for the patient's bill of rights and I'd like to be for closing the gun show loophole, and I'd like not to squander the surplus, and you know, save Social Security and Medicare for the next generation. I'd like to raise the minimum wage. I'd like to do these things. But I just can't. And I feel terrible about it."

Much as The Scrapbook hates to admit it, this sounds about right. Perhaps the president understands "compassionate conservatism" so well because the phrase is so Clintonian. We await his exegesis of Al Gore's "pragmatic idealism."

Coincidentally, as if to confirm the president's suspicions, the same night George W. Bush's spokeswoman Karen Hughes was asked, on MSNBC's *Equal Time*, whether the compassionate conservative supported raising the minimum wage. Behold comp-con in practice:

"Governor Bush said today that he thinks in some parts of the country there may be an argument for raising the minimum wage. On the other hand, he has concern that the minimum wage, for example here in inner-city Baltimore, where there are young teenage children who want to get summer jobs, where there might be trouble—where they might have trouble finding jobs if the minimum wage were increased. So he's certainly willing to look at that proposal, but I think there are some concerns that need to be addressed about it."

As near as this can be translated, it means, apparently, that George W. Bush supports raising the minimum wage for everyone but black kids in the ghetto. Compassionate conservatism remains a work in progress.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

FOOSBALL ÜBER ALLES

Whatever my other unseemly habits—spitting, streaking, breaking twenties in church offering plates—I've never been one who pretends to greatness. Sure, I have some great qualities: Kids love me, supermodels adore me, enemies cower at my cool assassin-like manner. But beneath the high-gloss veneer of the $10 haircut and the five-figure salary beats the heart of just a man, one who rests content in the shadow of greater men.

Even as a youth, I suffered from a sense of also-ran-ness. In Indian Guides, a sort of tom-tom-beating Cub Scouts, I missed earning an eagle feather after refusing to sing a mandatory duet with my father (Dad, or Red Hawk, as he was then called, was all set to go with "Now That the Buffalo's Gone"). In Little League, I was an all-star alternate—on standby should an actual all-star pop a hamstring while carpooling to the ballpark.

Red Hawk was never one to infuse us with false hopes. He took to calling us the "The Runner-Up Family," an obvious jab at me, and perhaps my sister, who'd been voted the third grade's second-most outstanding student. Dad liked to say, "Find a niche, no matter how small, and dominate it." So I followed his advice on both counts. I became a foosball virtuoso.

There is perhaps no niche smaller than that reserved for the expert foosball player. Not that I am merely expert. I play foosball (also called "table soccer") as Marciano fought and Pollock painted: as a sense-bending cyclone of barely contained chaos. If you see me at a foosball table, flee. If I don't rout you outright, I will toy with you, leading you through a Habitrail of humiliations before packing your gizzard off in a go-cup.

I indulge in this shameless display of braggadocio without fear of recriminations, because chances are, you couldn't care less. Foosball is the ideal sport—more primal than Ping-Pong, more cerebral than air hockey—but it has fallen into obscurity since its zenith 20 years ago. Once stationed in every frat house and bowling alley, foosball tables have been consigned to the slag-heap of '70s kitsch. People now play the game ironically, the way they eat fondue or sit in beanbag chairs—as a smirky, postmodern nostalgia trip. Consequently, my God-given gift has been shrunk to an exotic talent, like yodeling or sock-puppeteering. Or worse, I've become a freakish curiosity, like my second-grade classmate Ricky, who on a dare, would eat anything off the floor of the bus—a great icebreaker, but then what?

When I learned the game as an Air Force brat in West Germany, foosball was more than a diversion, it was a matter of national pride. Failing to assimilate in our small farm village, we Yanks didn't have much use for the Teutonic ingrates our fathers were paid to protect. They made fun of our gas-guzzling Oldsmobiles. We made fun of their mothers' bushy armpits and their country's hosting the Holocaust. Tensions boiled over in winter ice-ball fights, where a Texas-transplant like me was completely outmatched. We Americans likewise met ugly ends playing soccer, which Germans blasphemously call "football."

But in foosball, as in lovemaking, it is all in the wrists. And ours were Gordian cables, thick and nimble from years of dribbling basketballs and throwing pigskins. As we ritually sacrificed Germans, listening for the sweet kerplunk of the polyurethane ball descending into the throat of the goal, we'd doff our caps with felicitations like, "Hey Fritz, remind you of the Dresden firebombing?" (Kids are cruel.)

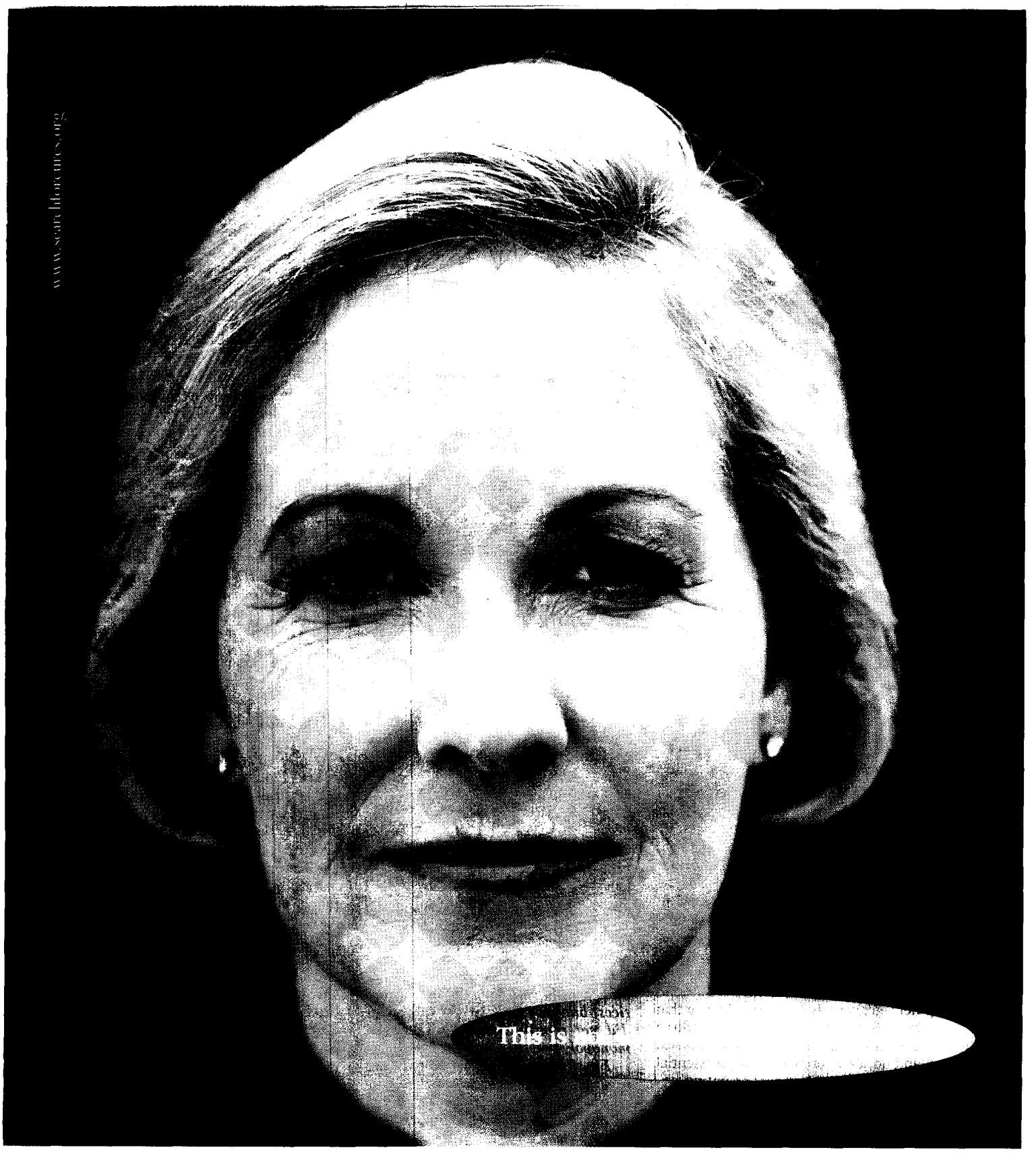
Two decades later, I still have one of the deadliest pull-shots on the planet, which I rediscovered when my in-laws bought me a foosball table this past Christmas. It sits tastefully beneath a chandelier in my formerly unfurnished dining room. I expected this would improve family relations. In the past, I welcomed unannounced visits from relatives by hiding till they tired of knocking. Now, I insist they come over—which they've stopped doing altogether. I don't know why. It may be because of my singing when racking up points on the squeaky abacus, or because of my shirtless, sports-bra-less victory romps through the living room, or because as a gentleman sportsman, I rank somewhere between Albert Belle and the Great Santini.

In any case, I'm down to playing the neighborhood children, whom I recruit vigorously, despite their mothers' looking at me as if I'm luring the little dears with sweetmeats to take snapshots of them in the basement. So far, my only return customer is the 7-year-old next door. She's a tough kid. Her wrists are like twigs, but she rarely cries when I taunt her. The other day, however, I had to rattle her baby teeth with a gourd-thumping monkey shot.

She deserved it—she's no better than the Germans. She claimed she had to leave early to go to soccer practice.

MATT LABASH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



It's the face of Connie Pierce. She's married to her high school sweetheart, has twin daughters and a job she loves. She has also been fighting multiple sclerosis (MS) for a decade. She credits family support, a sense of humor and advances in medicines from America's pharmaceutical companies with helping to dramatically slow the progression of her MS. Pharmaceutical company researchers continue to make breakthroughs and won't stop until there's a cure. So people like Connie can live and love and laugh for years to come.

America's Pharmaceutical Companies

Leading the way in the search for cures

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Microsoft: Guilty as Charged

Thomas W. Hazlett and George Bittlingmayer's article on the Microsoft trial brought to mind a current liberal mantra: "Rates of imprisonment are skyrocketing even though crime rates are plummeting" ("Befuddled by 'Internet Time,'" July 5/July 12). Does that mean we are obsessed with locking people up unnecessarily? No, crime rates are dropping precisely *because* more criminals are getting locked up! And perhaps Microsoft is finally getting some significant competition *because* the Department of Justice is suing it for antitrust violations. Indeed, many of the positive developments cited in the article occurred *after* the suit was filed.

It is amazing how "weak" some find the case against Microsoft, when by most accounts Justice is expected to win handily. Microsoft was dictating to manufacturers that they must install (and pay for) Microsoft's operating systems on every single computer they sell—or none. If such extortion is not an abuse of monopoly, what is? And just a few years ago Microsoft was downplaying the Internet; now, with no significant innovation, it dominates the browser market. If that is a sign of healthy competition, imagine what unhealthy competition must be like!

I believe in the free market as much as anyone. But Microsoft's dominance in the market is no more proof of the superiority of its software than Bill Clinton's election and reelection are proof of the superiority of his policies. Naive computer users have been misled into dependence on Microsoft just as voters have been misled by Clinton's demagoguery. It is no coincidence that both Bills have such difficulty telling the truth under oath! Yes, oral sex is sex, and no, a web browser is *not* an essential part of a general-purpose operating system, regardless of what the definition of "is" is.

Russell A. Paielli
San Jose, CA

Thomas W. Hazlett and George Bittlingmayer respond: ***The Microsoft antitrust case must be strong, Russell Paielli argues, if the government is expected to win. The U.S. government has been investigating Microsoft continuously since 1990 and, by its current claims, has uniformly failed to curb monopoly abuses. Indeed, the June 1998 ruling by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals found that the government had wrongly accused Microsoft of violating a 1995 consent decree. The court held that the browser was lawfully and usefully integrated into the operating system.***

Paielli asks about Microsoft's all-or-nothing contracts with computer makers, apparently unaware that such "take or pay" contracts can create substantial efficiencies and are quite common in competitive industries. Moreover, Microsoft was enjoined from using such contracts in the 1995 consent decree. That not only suggests that the abuses the DOJ currently alleges in the browser "jihad" have nothing to do with such practices, but that ending such practices did not remedy Microsoft's alleged monopoly power.

Finally, Paielli argues that we are now "getting some significant competition because the DOJ is suing" Microsoft. But Justice insists that market developments (including the powerful anti-Microsoft alliance formed by Netscape, AOL, and Sun) have no connection to the case. We are more sympathetic to Paielli's attempt to connect the dots, but he draws precisely the wrong inference. The unleashing of the Internet IPO juggernaut is universally credited to Netscape's hugely successful initial public offering on August 9, 1995. This is High Noon in the government's browser war scenario. Meanwhile, today's new rivals to Windows are not those hand-picked for protection in the government's Java-friendly case filed one year ago, but unforeseen systems like Linux and BeOS. The government said that such competition couldn't emerge so long as Microsoft bundled its browser with its operating system—sorry, but they're wrong.

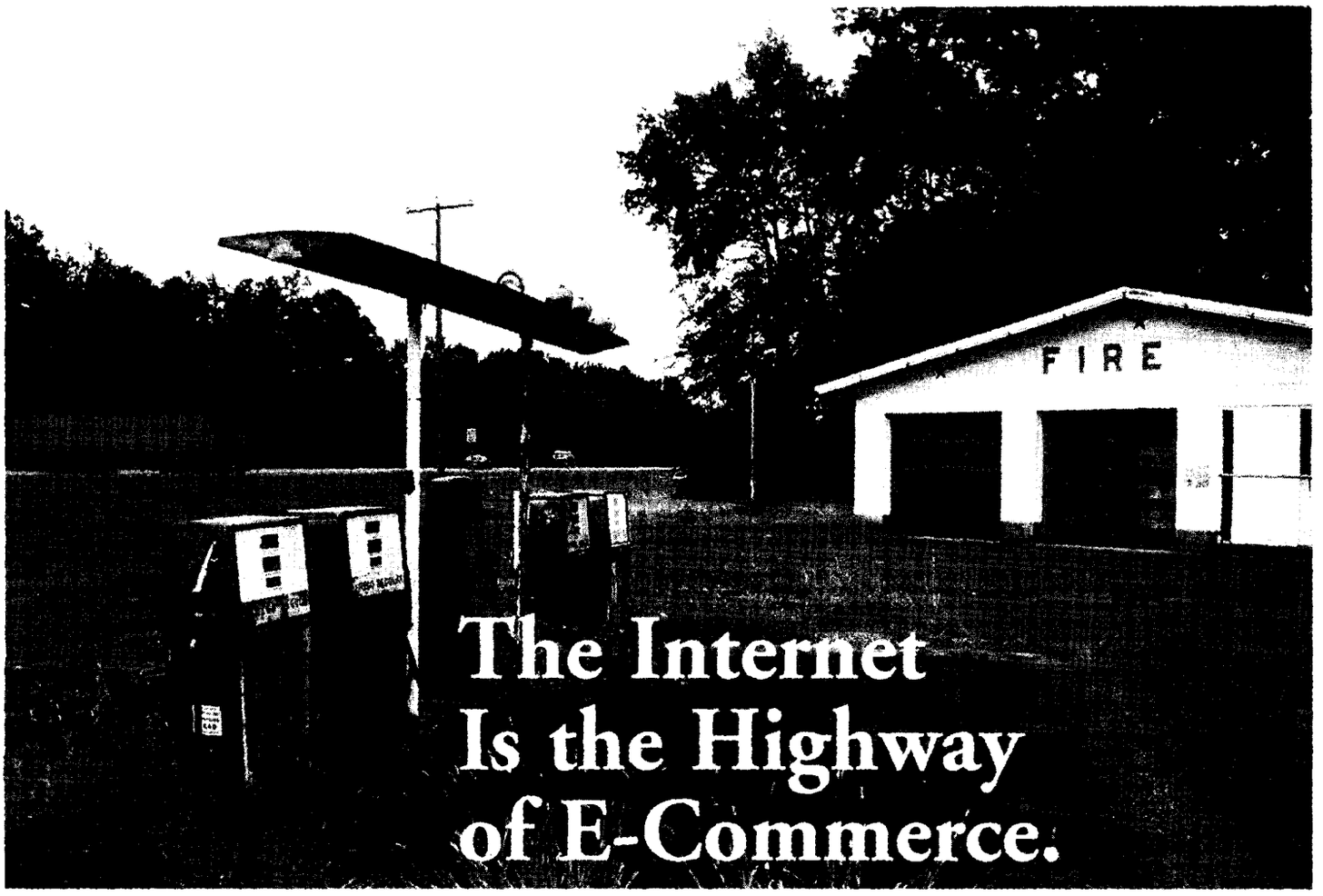
We have looked at stock market reactions to the Microsoft antitrust case in a statistically rigorous way. Investors with billions of dollars riding on the efficiency of the PC software market short computer stocks like Compaq, Intel, and CompUSA when the antitrust case moves forward. Paielli's theory that the DOJ antitrust effort is making the world safe for efficiency is rejected by capitalists with money on the line. "Believe in free markets," does he? Well—here's his chance.

The Morality Disruption

Andrew Ferguson's review of Francis Fukuyama's *The Great Disruption* belittles as "myth" the materialistic and evolutionary science presupposed by Fukuyama, and suggests that it is no better founded in evidence and reason than the theological myths of natural law and free will and is, furthermore, less satisfactory as a foundation for morality ("The End of Nature and the Next Man," June 28). These comparisons are wrongheaded and misleading in ways it would take a treatise to fully expose, but I shall be brief.

Take sociobiology first. According to Ferguson, we learn little from it that Aristotle and common sense have not taught us—for example, that human beings have a natural disposition to sociability, and that men are different from women. This ignores the fact that sociobiology does more than reiterate these platitudes, itself an important thing to do given repeated denials of their truth by socialist followers of Rousseau. Sociobiology also explains these truths in a way that would have been incomprehensible to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The Internet Is the Highway of E-Commerce.

But What If You Don't Have An On-Ramp?

Time was, success depended on your access to the highway. If you didn't have an on-ramp, everything passed you by.

That's still true. If your community isn't served by *high-speed* access to the Internet, you lose.

Your current businesses will be forced to go where they can connect to high speed Internet service. The next great "dot.com" business will create jobs somewhere else.

Yet some people in Washington still want to prevent America's local telephone companies from building the "on-ramps" to the information super highway.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was intended to apply to telephone and cable networks. But now those rules are mistakenly being applied to the Internet.

Several bills are moving through Congress to fix this problem. Legislation authored by Congressmen Billy Tauzin and John Dingell, Bob Goodlatte and Rick Boucher, and Senator John McCain would permit local telephone companies to build these networks and accelerate deployment of high-speed connections to the Internet.

The legislation does not change the restrictions on phone companies entering the voice long distance business, but it does let *everybody* build on-ramps to the Internet.

Don't let the Net pass you by.

GTE

INTERNETWORKING
POWERED BY BBN℠

www.gte.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Aristotle, as great a genius as he was.

Now consider free will. To believe in it is to endorse not myth but miracle. As Plato, Augustine, and Kant all defined it, a free will is a miraculous capacity to transcend the natural order, by making choices that have no explanation; so, are unintelligible by definition. Therefore, to prefer belief in free will to science—which says that human beings act as they do because they have desires that are rooted in biology and shaped by society—is to prefer mystification to understanding. If morality depends on that, we are in serious trouble indeed.

MAX HOCUTT
TUSCALOOSA, AL

Andrew Ferguson deftly presents the problem with attempting to justify traditional morality through reliance on materialistic biology in his review of Francis Fukuyama's *The Great Disruption*. That hopeless project has been giving me the creeps, to borrow Ferguson's phrase, since I read James Q. Wilson's *The Moral Sense* several years ago. However, Ferguson's concluding suggestion—that we ought better explain human nature by abandoning materialism as a starting point in favor of human thought and will—is not quite satisfying. Just as solely biological explanations for human nature are too determinist to be true, an explanation for human nature that rests solely on individual consciousness is too solipsistic and nihilistic to be true. The proposition from which traditional morality springs is not the modernist "I think, therefore I am," but something along the lines of "God is, and He has spoken."

KEVIN L. HICKS
MOYLAN, PA

DE-FUNDING DEMOCRACY

THE SCRAPBOOK is right—zeroing out funding for the National Endowment for Democracy is indeed a "shabby way for conservatives to treat a worthy Reagan legacy" ("Not a Penny for NED?" June 28). The relatively minuscule amount of money appropriated to the NED ($32 million out of a $1.7 trillion budget) constitutes an incredible and meaningful investment in teaching other nations the concepts of democracy and self-rule which have made the United States the "shining city on the hill" of which President Reagan spoke so eloquently.

I am fortunate enough to have been a trainer at seminars in democracy and political party-building in both Angola and Morocco. In both places—Morocco, a poor but modernizing north African nation, and Angola, a desperately poor sub-Saharan nation—the people I met were insatiably hungry for knowledge about our political system. In many cases, the people were educated (often in America) and had the opportunity to live elsewhere. However, they were irrevocably dedicated to bringing the concepts of constitutional rule of law, free and fair elections, and a republican form of government to their own country.

With our 200-year tradition of democracy, we can and do take freedom for granted. We owe it to ourselves and to other countries to share the secrets of our success, so that freedom can ring worldwide. Far from being eliminated, funding for the NED should be dramatically increased, if not endowed permanently. Dollar for dollar, the return on this investment far exceeds that of almost every other federal program.

ROGER AUSTIN
GAINESVILLE, FL

WOMEN LIKE SCIENCE, TOO

At this late date in the evolution of humankind I was very surprised to see David Gelernter advance the argument that women and girls just don't like math and science ("Women and Science at Yale," June 21). Gelernter, who teaches at Yale, uses this argument to support his claim that efforts at Yale to hire more female professors in the hard sciences are ill-founded. In response, I invite Gelernter and those who were influenced by his article to look at the example of Mount Holyoke College, which has been a leader in science education since its inception as a women's institution more than 160 years ago.

In this century, Mount Holyoke College, along with Bryn Mawr, has been among the foremost producers of women going on to earn Ph.D.s in the hard sciences. Mount Holyoke graduates are in top positions in the sciences throughout the world. Currently, more than 25 percent of our students are science or math majors. Since 1990, well over 200 of our graduates have gone on to attain advanced degrees in the sciences and medicine. At the same time, this institution is a leader in developing new approaches to the teaching of the sciences to undergraduates.

How have we done this if females are predisposed to dislike test tubes and Fermat's last theorem and pulsed molecular beam Fourier transform microwave spectrometers? It might be because our faculty has always included a significant number of women scientists. In fact, our faculty in the hard sciences is now 46 percent female. Or, it might be because science, unlike outmoded stereotypes regarding female intellectual proclivities, is not the domain of one gender.

JOANNE V. CREIGHTON
PRESIDENT
MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
SOUTH HADLEY, MA

PERNICIOUS PARODY

I am writing to protest the tasteless and cruel "War in Kosovo Reenactment" playbill (Parody, June 28). I do not deny that this item was funny in places. And a barbed wit used to sting the complacent and comfortable into anger, thought, and action can be a worthy tool, and those stung may praise it in the end. But sheer mockery of the weak and suffering is another matter. Do I need to remind you that it was thousands of *real* people, including women and children, who died from this bombing campaign?

MICHAEL G. MURAD
NEW HOPE, MN

THE WEEKLY STANDARD
welcomes letters to the editor.
Letters will be edited for length and clarity and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
THE WEEKLY STANDARD
1150 17th St., NW
Washington, DC 20036.
You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT'S ABOUT TIME CONGRESS HELPED AMERICANS

ACT MORE RESPONSIBLY

TOWARDS THEIR RETIREMENT.

CAREFREE. HEALTHY. FINANCIALLY SECURE. This is the retirement we all dream about. But in reality it doesn't always turn out this way. In fact, over half of older Americans may require some type of long-term care during their lifetimes.

With the cost of nursing home care expected to increase from $40,000 to more than $190,000 annually over the next 30 years, long-term care insurance is more important than ever. It can mean the difference between a financially devastating retirement or one that allows independence and peace of mind.

Let's help Americans afford long-term care insurance by providing tax incentives for those willing to take responsibility for their futures.

Tell Congress to support a tax bill that provides a secure retirement for all Americans. It's the responsible thing to do.

American Council of Life Insurance 1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington D.C. 20004

Financial Security. For Life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The real story of our Trillion Dollar Commitment is not the trillion dollars. It's the commitment.

Five years ago, we set a goal for ourselves. Help ten million working families have homes of their own.

All kinds of families. Low- and moderate-income families, minorities, immigrants, people with special housing needs, and those living in distressed communities. No matter what their situation, we believe these families should have homes of their own. So we committed one trillion dollars to do even more to help make that happen.

But the real story of our Trillion Dollar Commitment is not the trillion dollars at all, or the $700 billion of mortgage funds we've already delivered. It's the commitment. It's about a private company that is determined to create new homeowners by lowering the cost of the American Dream for America's families. And that is why Fannie Mae is continually working to give mortgage lenders, housing leaders, and communities from coast to coast the tools they need to extend the dream of homeownership to everyone.

Through our Trillion Dollar Commitment, Fannie Mae and our lending partners have helped over eight million families that might never have had the chance to see their dreams come true. And you simply can't put a price on that.

FannieMae

www.fanniemae.com

©1999, Fannie Mae. All rights reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

FREE TAIWAN

Taiwan's President Li Teng-hui sent the American foreign policy establishment into a nervous frenzy last week when he declared that Taiwan would henceforth negotiate with China as one state to another. China experts are working overtime on their op-eds chastising Taiwan for its provocative action. And the Clinton administration has already made known its displeasure with Li's statements, denouncing them as unhelpful and reiterating the administration's own agreement with Beijing's one-China policy. Meanwhile, Beijing went nuclear, literally. In a document charmingly entitled "Facts Speak Louder Than Words and Lies Will Collapse on Themselves," Beijing informed the world of what the Cox committee and other investigations had already revealed: that it has a neutron bomb, just perfect for dropping on a nearby island that China would like to occupy. This threat will no doubt cause even more anxiety among American China hands, who will blame President Li for increasing the danger of another crisis in the Taiwan Straits.

AMBIGUITY UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES HAS BECOME DANGEROUS. THE QUESTION IS: WILL THE U.S. DEFEND TAIWAN OR NOT?

Everyone should calm down. By carefully stripping away the absurd fictions of the "one-China" policy, President Li is actually doing all concerned a big favor. After all, it is true that "facts speak louder than words." The fact is that Taiwan is and has been a sovereign state for decades, with its own government, its own army, its own flag, its own flourishing economy, and full possession of its territory. Since the early 1990s, moreover, Taiwan has been a democracy, and nothing could be clearer than that the Taiwanese people want to remain separate from mainland China as long as that territory is ruled by a dictatorship. Until there can be one *democratic* China, they insist, there must be two Chinas.

These facts are, of course, inconvenient for the Clinton administration, which has adhered slavishly to the fiction of "one China" embodied in over a quarter-century's worth of Sino-American agreements. Beginning with the Shanghai Communique of 1972, the United States declared its understanding that both sides of the China-Taiwan dispute agreed that there was but one China. At the time of the Shanghai Communique, this was true in an odd sort of way. Both the Communist government of Beijing and the authoritarian government of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang agreed that there was one China, and they both insisted it was theirs. The United States used this cute "one-China" formulation as a way of avoiding the issue. Anyway, the Cold War was on, and U.S. officials believed they needed China's help in containing the Soviet Union. If the price was a certain ambiguity and even some deception on the subject of Taiwan, so be it.

Twenty-seven years later, however, the world is a very different place. The people of Taiwan, now able to express their will electorally, have declared that they do not want to rule the mainland, and they do not want the mainland to rule them. There are two Chinas, not one. This puts an end to the smoke-and-mirrors game of the Shanghai Communique. The Clinton administration's spokesmen can say "one China" till they're blue in the face, but, to quote the Chinese government again, "lies will collapse on themselves." And then, of course, there is that other small difference between now and 1972: The Cold War is over. The Soviet Union is gone, and the biggest challenge to American interests in the world today comes from Beijing, not Moscow. With that rather large shift in global strategic realities, the need for ambiguity on Taiwan has disappeared.

Indeed, ambiguity under the present circumstances has become dangerous. The fact is, now and in the years to come, the United States will have to answer one simple question on Taiwan. If the people of Taiwan want to be treated as a sovereign state and refuse to be reunited with the dictatorship on the mainland, as they do, and if China insists that Taiwan must be reunited with the mainland, by force if nec-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

essary, as it does, the question is this: Will the United States come to Taiwan's defense if and when these conflicting desires lead to military confrontation?

Until now, the United States has tried to avoid giving a clear answer to this question. The U.S. government has repeatedly expressed its opposition to any effort to settle the Taiwan matter by force. State Department spokesman Jamie Rubin made a strong statement along these lines last week. But we have also left open the possibility that if war starts as a result of provocative statements by Taiwanese leaders, then we might just stand by and do nothing. That was the not-so-subtle warning delivered in person to the Taiwanese by former secretary of defense William Perry, visiting Taiwan at the behest of the president a year and a half ago. The name for this policy of studied equivocation has been "strategic ambiguity," and the logic behind it is that any promise by the United States to come to Taiwan's aid will only encourage the Taiwanese to declare independence.

But if history is any guide, it is precisely this kind of ambiguity that leads to miscalculation and war. American words and American security commitments now need to conform to reality. And the reality is that if the people of Taiwan choose to remain a separate state, and if China responds with force or the threat of force, no American president would refuse to come to Taiwan's defense. Principle would demand that we act, and by the way, so would America's strategic interests. The incorporation of Taiwan by the present Chinese government—even if accomplished peacefully—would be a disaster for the United States and its East Asian allies. Imagine what our allies in the region would think about American staying power in the Pacific if we accepted such a crushing strategic setback without lifting a finger.

This simple reality should become the basis of American policy toward Taiwan. The Shanghai Communique is in fact no more relevant to our present strategic circumstances than that other great agreement of 1972—the ABM treaty. The time has come for the United States to do away with a dangerous ambiguity and make clear that it will come to Taiwan's defense if China uses force or even threatens to use force.

Such a test may well come over the next few months. It would hardly be surprising if China were to respond to President Li's statement with another show of force. In 1996, it fired ballistic missiles into the sea near Taiwan's main harbors. This time, China may threaten a blockade of the entire island or take some other action to frighten the Taiwanese into backing off from their recent statements. If China does take such action, the United States should not hesitate to send the Seventh Fleet to Taiwan's waters, just as it did in 1996. In fact, the administration ought to send some ships there now, as a clear warning to the Chinese that they should not even consider any threatening military action. China hands will complain that this raises tensions. In fact, deterring the Chinese now is the best way to avoid a bigger crisis later. The less ambiguous U.S. actions are, the less chance there is that the Chinese will make a dangerous miscalculation.

There are also important steps Congress can take to clarify matters. Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms, joined by Democratic senator Robert Torricelli, has proposed important legislation—the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act—aimed at strengthening security ties between the United States and Taiwan and increasing Taiwan's own ability to deter hostile action by the Chinese. The Helms bill calls for lifting restrictions on arms sales to Taiwan, ending the ban on high-level military exchanges between the United States and Taiwan, and providing Taiwan with key weapons systems, including theater missile defenses, that would make it much harder for the Chinese military to use or even threaten force against Taiwan. Republicans—especially those who claim to be concerned about the increasing threat China poses to American interests—should take the lead in passing this legislation.

There is also a presidential campaign underway. The next president will inevitably be confronted by the Taiwan problem. His ability to deal effectively with any crisis will be affected by decisions taken now. Yet so far we have heard little from the leading Republican candidates about the brewing cross-straits crisis. Senator John McCain rightly stood up for the people of Kosovo under attack by the brutal dictatorship in Belgrade. Does he have a similar concern for the well-being of the democratic people of Taiwan? George W. Bush recently pointed out, correctly, that China is a strategic competitor of the United States, not a strategic partner, and he declared, also correctly, that American policy in Asia should first and foremost aim at protecting our friends and allies. Well, Taiwan is one of those friends. Do Bush and McCain and the other presidential candidates support the right of the Taiwanese people to determine their own future? Do they oppose the Clinton administration's outdated "one-China" policy? And do they support passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act? These are important questions. Those who want to lead the United States and the world in the next century need to give some answers.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan, for the Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE COMMITTEE FOR A NON-LEFT MAJORITY

www.NOLEFT.com

WEEK OF JULY 19, 1999

See the **letter** California GOP Vice Chairman Shawn Steel sent to 3,500 legislators and party activists

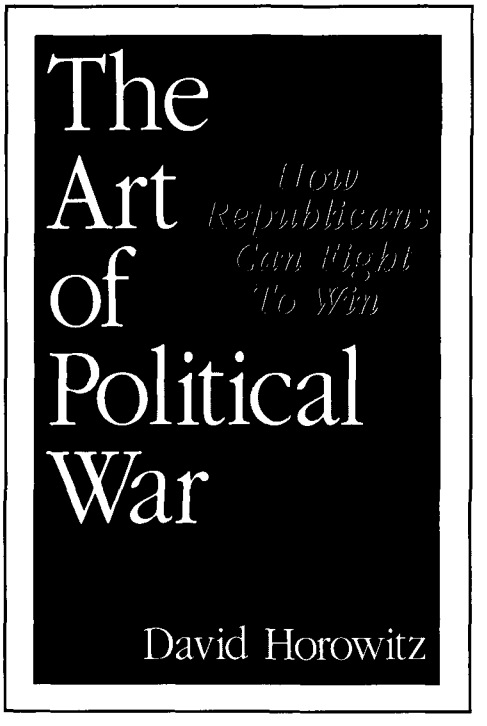
CNLM's new national print-media ad campaign, **It's The Politics, Stupid!**

PollWatch: **Bush Maintains Lead after Announcements**

Letters to the Editor:
Readers Debate the Future of the GOP

The China Syndrome
Who's Responsible for America's Security Crisis?

Reaching Out: Conservatism with a Heart



An Agenda for the Republican Future

Contact us:
1-800-699-3313

QUICKLINKS: THE CONTENDERS 2000

Gary Bauer	Elizabeth Dole	John McCain
Pat Buchanan	Steve Forbes	Dan Quayle
George W. Bush	John Kasich	Bob Smith

NAVIGATE NOLEFT.COM

The Spark | PollWatch | Support CNLM | The China Syndrome | Letters to the Editor

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

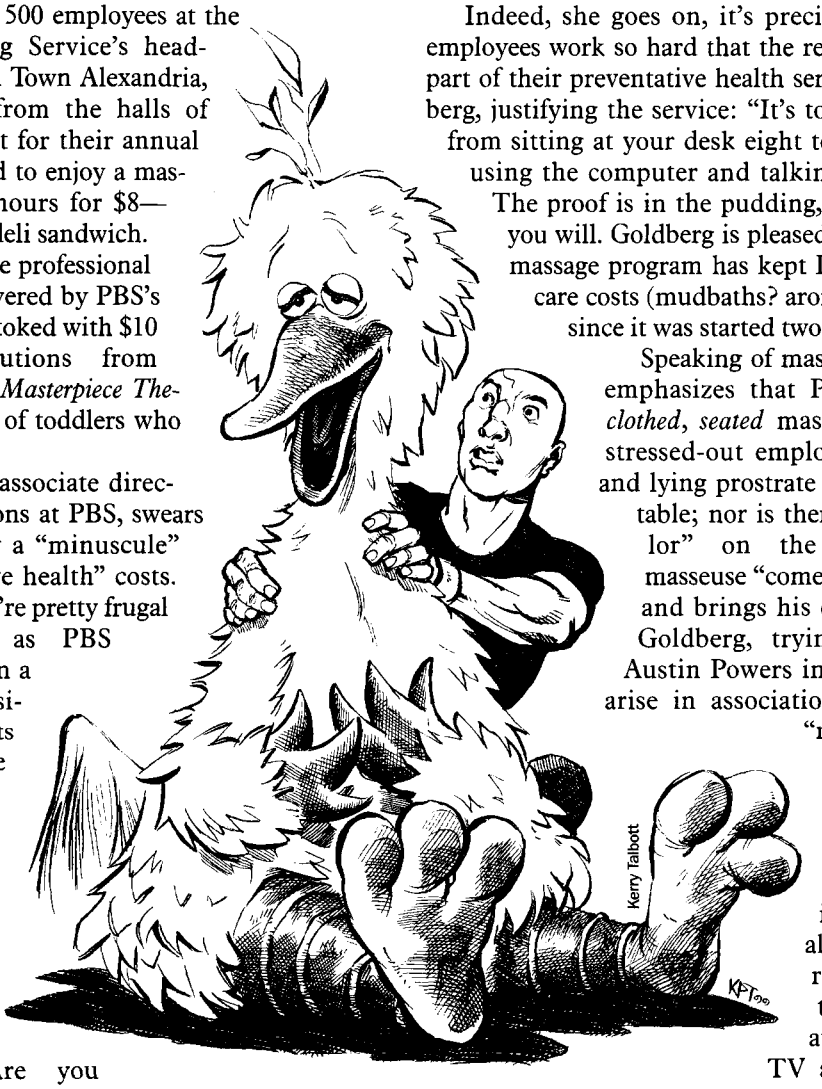
PBS's Massage Parlor

by Bernadette Malone

THE NEXT TIME Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch shake you down for a contribution to the noble cause of public television, ask them about PBS's in-house massage service that your money will subsidize.

That's right: All 500 employees at the Public Broadcasting Service's headquarters in tony Old Town Alexandria, Va.—ten minutes from the halls of Congress they haunt for their annual funding—are invited to enjoy a massage during office hours for $8—about the price of a deli sandwich. The remainder of the professional masseuse's tab is covered by PBS's "wellness budget," stoked with $10 and $20 contributions from retirees addicted to *Masterpiece Theatre* and the parents of toddlers who watch *Teletubbies*.

Dara Goldberg, associate director of communications at PBS, swears the expense is only a "minuscule" part of "preventative health" costs. She assures me, "We're pretty frugal over here." But as PBS receives $250 million a year in federal subsidies and the rest of its budget from the solicited contributions of viewers and foundations, the massage perk strikes many donors I talked to as extravagant. And even some PBS employees.


Kerry Talbott

"Massages?! Are you sure?" asks one of Goldberg's officemates when I call to check out my source's tip.

"Yeah, sign up to get one," I tell him. "I hear they're yours for the asking."

Goldberg herself is not amused that I am investigating the kinkier side of public broadcasting. "Will you let me know if you're going to be doing something on this? . . . I hope you're not," she petitions. (There are so many other, more important things to write about, she goes on, employing the characteristic "there's no story here" maneuver of nervous Washington press operatives in the Clinton era.)

She continues: "Can I ask, how did you hear about it? Because a lot of our employees don't even know it's available." There's a massage sign-up sheet outside the sixth-floor human resources office, and sometimes an e-mail notification goes around. But PBS employees are often "too busy working" to notice, she explains.

Indeed, she goes on, it's precisely because PBS employees work so hard that the regular massage is a part of their preventative health service. Here's Goldberg, justifying the service: "It's to relieve the stress from sitting at your desk eight to ten hours a day, using the computer and talking on the phone." The proof is in the pudding, or massage oil, if you will. Goldberg is pleased to report that the massage program has kept PBS's other health care costs (mudbaths? aromatherapy?) down since it was started two years ago.

Speaking of massage oil, Goldberg emphasizes that PBS offers a *fully clothed, seated* massage. None of its stressed-out employees is disrobing and lying prostrate on a linen-draped table; nor is there a massage "parlor" on the premises. The masseuse "comes every other week and brings his own chair," offers Goldberg, trying to dispel the Austin Powers imagery that might arise in association with the word "massage."

PBS has long been targeted by budget-cutters in Washington as a bastion of elitist television liberals on welfare. The revelation last week that Boston affiliate station WGBH-TV and Washington's WETA had traded donor lists with the Democratic party has hardly helped smooth the way with congressional Republicans for this year's $300 million budget request. After Congress finishes with PBS during the anticipated September spending battle, Barney the Dinosaur and his cohorts in Old Town may need one of those Swedish deep-tissue massages.

Bernadette Malone is a political reporter for syndicated columnist Robert D. Novak.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Smith Goes Third Party

by Tucker Carlson

"I'M GOING TO BE president of the United States," Sen. Bob Smith of New Hampshire says in a perfectly even voice. "I really believe that."

It's not a majority view. Two weeks ago, only Smith, his family, and selected political science professors seemed to know he was running for president. He was polling twelfth among the twelve announced Republican candidates; only one percent of the voters in his own state said they planned to vote for him. Things looked grim for Smith 2000. Then, last week, Smith announced he was leaving the Republican party and becoming an Independent. Instantly, the electoral calculus changed. Bob Smith may have been last among Republicans, but in the field of third-party candidates, he is indisputably Number One.

Of course, depending on how you count, Smith may also be the *only* third-party candidate in the presidential race. Not that it makes any difference to him. The point is, Smith explains from his office in the Dirksen Building, people are excited about the possibility of a Smith administration. "Without exaggeration, we've received 5,000 pledges of support," he says. "They've come from Republicans, Democrats, Independents. It's unbelievable. We're not equipped to handle it." Smith pauses, allowing time for the sheer size of the political tsunami to sink in. No reporter, he recognizes, should have to take news like this at face value. "You probably think I'm trying to game you," he says understandingly. "But I'm not."

Smith doesn't seem like the kind of politician who goes around gaming people. Rather, he seems perpetually gamed, the sort of person for whom life's unpleasant realities dawn slowly and hard. You get the feeling Smith was the last kid on his block to learn the truth about Santa Claus.

He was almost certainly the last person in Washington to discover that the Republican platform is irrelevant to actual politics. Smith was outraged when he found out. "The Republican platform," he declared in his party-switching speech to the Senate, "is a meaningless document that has been put out there so that suckers like me and maybe suckers like you out there can read it."

Smith's speech went on like this for close to an hour. Through all of it, he howled like a man deceived, the lone member of the Senate Sucker Caucus. He even read portions of the platform aloud. It was a mean thing to do—as close to a dirty trick as Smith is probably capable of—but instructive nonetheless. "As a first step in reforming government," Smith thundered, reciting the painfully hopeful words of some unnamed party scribe, "we support elimination of the Departments of Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Education, and Energy." Whatever happened to that promise? he demand-

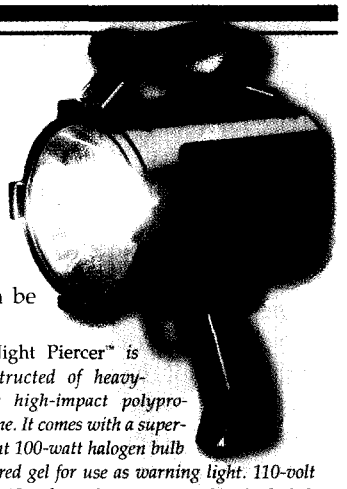
Almost as bright as the sun...

Night Piercer™

1 Million CandlePower Halogen Spotlight

only $69.95*

**But read this ad for an even better deal!*



The *Night Piercer*™ casts a focused beam that can be seen for many miles. It is 20-times brighter than automobile headlights, more luminous than aircraft landing lights. This powerful light is indispensable for tracking and exploring unknown territory and for any contingencies at night, in plane, boat, truck, or car. With its red gel, the *Night Piercer*™ can be a lifesaver in any emergency. The unit contains two sealed heavy-duty lead-acid batteries and can be recharged either through your household current or through the cigarette lighter socket of your car, RV or boat. Both adapters are included.

• Night Piercer™ *is constructed of heavy-duty high-impact polypropylene. It comes with a super-bright 100-watt halogen bulb and red gel for use as warning light. 110-volt and 12-volt rechargers are also included.*

We import *Night Piercers*™ in very large quantities and are therefore able to bring you this outstanding accessory for just $69.95. (Compare with our competitor's price of $99!). **But we have an even better deal:** ***Buy two for just $139.90 and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** The *Night Piercer*™ should be your companion on all your travels. Don't leave home without it—order it today!

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or Visa/MasterCard. Please give order number #1072E847. Add ship./ins. charge of $9.95 for one unit or $19.90 for three units (plus sales tax for CA delivery). You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund postage. For customer service or wholesale information, please call (415) 643-2810.

since 1967 **haverhills®**

2360 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94107

Order by toll-free phone: (800) 797-7367 or by fax: (415) 643-2818

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ed. Or to the promise to defund Legal Services? Not to mention public broadcasting, the U.N. and the National Endowment for the Arts. And where's the legislation that would "make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children"? After five and a half years of Republican control of Congress, Smith wanted to know, where is any of it?

It's easy to sympathize with Smith. (Imagine if you woke up one morning after 10 years in office and found politics in your political party.) It's harder to understand how he made it all the way to the U.S. Senate, much less how he'll mount a credible presidential campaign. For the moment, though, several of the other Republican candidates appear to view Smith as useful. Before Smith had even announced his defection, Gary Bauer and Dan Quayle chimed in to say they could understand the senator's frustration with the unprincipled, lemming-like (read: George W. Bush-supporting) Republican Establishment. "We are the party of middle America, not the party of the country club," explained Quayle, who grew up on a golf course.

Bob Smith

The idea seems to be that Smith's attacks on Republican moderates will call attention to Bush's fundamentally moderate positions on social issues, thereby energizing the fabled Republican Base. Once energized, the Base will recognize Bush for the Rockefeller Republican he is, and support other, more conservative candidates. In the end, the reasoning goes, Bush may still win, but he'll have to act more conservative to do so. "The Smith thing," says Bauer strategist Jeff Bell, "underscores what Gary has been saying all along, which is that there is going to be a contest."

It's not a totally crackpot theory. Smith will probably join the U.S. Taxpayers party, which is already on the ballot in several states. (The likelihood he'll sign up with the much larger Reform party diminished when Jesse Ventura didn't return his call.) And Smith's defection *could* increase the leverage of the remaining challengers to Bush. In any event, he won't need much money to run—Smith is happy to drive himself to events—and he seems deadly serious about staying in till November 2000. And if Bush is the nominee, Smith is betting that, as a third-party candidate, he can pick up the support Bush's failed conservative challengers have left behind.

Every candidate, of course, has a Scenario, the sometimes Rube Goldberg-like series of events that, if executed in sequence, leads to victory. Strategists at the George W. Bush campaign aren't impressed with Smith's. They have no snappy explanation for why Smith doesn't matter. They don't even bother to scoff. *Bob who?*

Smith seems ready for this. He knows there will always be some who will dismiss his campaign as a mere curiosity. "Some people view it as not even serious," Smith says in a tone that suggests he's passing on a secret. Then again, some people haven't seen the mail that has poured into Smith's office over the past few days. The mail that says Bob Smith of New Hampshire is going to be the next president of the United States. The mail that Smith fervently, wholeheartedly believes. "I think young people are going to be joining this campaign by the millions," he says. "I feel very confident about this. I'm absolutely convinced I can win. I wouldn't do it if I wasn't."

Smith pauses again. He's caught himself gloating. "I'm not trying to boast," he says, almost embarrassed. "I'm just trying to tell you what I think we can do."

Tucker Carlson is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

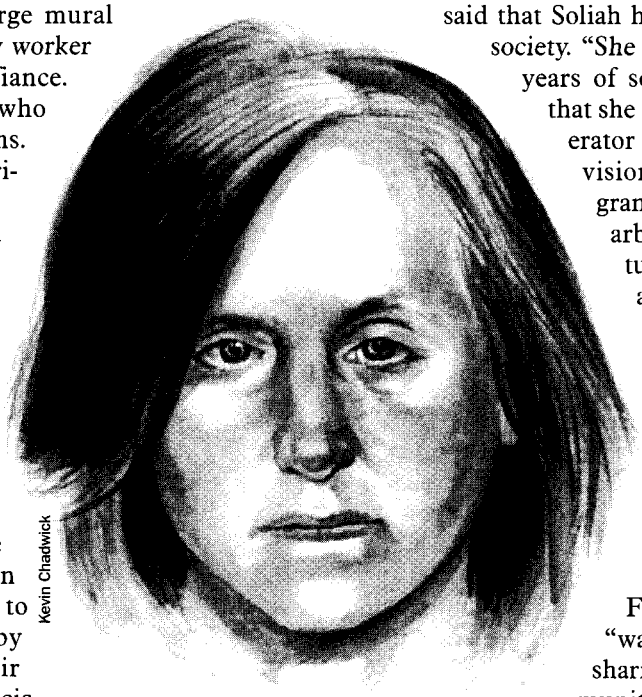
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE TERRORIST NEXT DOOR

by Elliot C. Rothenberg

SARA JANE OLSON is an exemplary citizen by Minnesota standards. She lives in a tony, upper-middle-class neighborhood of St. Paul. She campaigns for liberal political candidates. She has been prominent for years in African, Central American, and other "peace and justice" causes. She is an activist in a liberal church. She acts in feminist roles in local theater companies. She runs a bookstore which has a large mural portraying a female factory worker with her fist raised in defiance. Her husband is a doctor who shares her political passions. She is a runner. She is a serious cook.

The only problem with this idyllic picture is that Sara Jane Olson is not Sara Jane Olson. Her real name is Kathleen Soliah, and she has been a fugitive from justice in California for more than a quarter century. As a combat terrorist in what was called the Symbionese Liberation Army, Soliah attempted to murder police officers by placing bombs under their cars, helped kidnap Patricia Hearst, and held up banks. Hearst wrote in her autobiography that Soliah took part in a robbery where Soliah or a partner killed a bank customer with a shotgun. Soliah has been under indictment in Los Angeles since 1976. On June 16, her luck ran out. St. Paul police and FBI agents arrested her.



Kevin Chadwick

Kathleen Soliah

All this notwithstanding, Minnesota's political-media-cultural elite has closed ranks in support of Soliah.

Democratic party leaders have been unabashedly at the forefront. State senator Sandy Pappas, the Democratic candidate for mayor of St. Paul in the last election, attacked the police for arresting her. "Don't they have any real crimes to fight?" she asked. "We were all going to protests then." In a television interview, Pappas demanded Soliah's release and harped on her talents as a "wonderful gourmet dinner party host." State representative Andy Dawkins—the Democratic party's candidate for St. Paul mayor in the election before Pappas ran—and St. Paul City Council member Jay Benanav called Soliah "a great citizen of our community."

The dominant local media echoed the politicians. A front-page commentary headlined "Justice or what's just" in Minnesota's largest newspaper, the *Star Tribune* of Minneapolis, asked rhetorically, "Should model citizen Sara Jane Olson . . . be tried for crimes committed a quarter century ago?" A popular gossip columnist for the same newspaper said that Soliah has paid any debt she owed society. "She has demonstrated through years of social actions and potluck that she is rehabilitated." The moderator of Minnesota Public Television's weekly *Almanac* program, one of the state's leading arbiters of political correctitude, snarled on her show at an FBI agent, "Don't you have better things to do?"

To leaders of her church, Soliah is a saint. Said Rev. John Darlington, "We love Sara Jane. She goes about working for justice in an unjust world." Another minister, Jolyn Fontaine, said that Soliah "was really a person who was sharing God's love in the community."

Macalester College history professor Peter Rachleff called Soliah "quite progressive. She is a model for many of us."

Guthrie Theater veteran actor Stephen Pelinski said that the entire local theater community supports Soliah, "one of our most advanced actors." He expressed disappointment, though, that he was never invited to any of her parties.

A theater director was even more flamboyant in her support. For Lynn Musgrave, Soliah is "a pacifist and liberal Democrat who supports gun control." Apparently for everyone except herself.

Many of these worthies packed a court hearing to entreat a judge to release Soliah on modest bail. It was reminiscent of a hearing years earlier in Philadelphia where future senator Arlen Specter and others of the best of that city convinced a judge to release on bail Ira Einhorn, the so-called Unicorn Killer, arrested for murdering his girlfriend. After his release, Einhorn

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fled the country and never returned.

This time, Ramsey County district judge Kathleen Gearin did not make the same mistake. She refused to allow Soliah to become a fugitive once again. Ordered back to her cell, Soliah exited the courtroom, according to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, "in a manner fit for an actress, blowing kisses to her supporters."

Amid all this solicitude for the suspect, none of these people has expressed any comparable compassion for the dead bank customer and other targets of their friend's crimes. The suffering of these victims and their families does not seem to matter. Perhaps it is because the victims were just ordinary middle-class working folks who did not have the time or inclination to demonstrate in favor of the domestic and foreign causes in vogue from time to time. There is no evidence that any were gourmet cooks.

But what may be the most remarkable feature of this episode is the manifest contempt for the rule of law by those who purport to be Minnesota's leaders.

One Minnesota politician these days, however, falls outside the prevailing pattern of political correctness. Governor Jesse Ventura announced that, despite the protests of Soliah's supporters, he would extradite Soliah for trial in California. He called the statements of Pappas and the other politicians "beyond belief. What would Pappas suggest is a real crime?"

Maybe "The Mind" is not such a bad nickname after all.

Elliot C. Rothenberg is a Minneapolis attorney. His book* The Taming of the Press *will be published this fall.

Bill Clinton, Historian

by Peter Wehner

In the midst of all his other activities, one thing continues to preoccupy Bill Clinton: his frantic attempt to remake himself and rewrite history. Consider some of his more recent statements.

On June 25, President Clinton held a news conference during which a reporter asked if he took any personal responsibility for polarizing the country and generating antagonism. The president accepted none. Instead, he said, "I think generally in our country's history, that people who are progressive, people who try to change things, people who keep pushing the envelope, have generally elicited very strong, sometimes personally hostile, negative reaction. You read some of the things people said about President Roosevelt—in retrospect, because of the magnificent job he did, and because of the historic consequences of the time in which he served and what he did for America, we tend to think that everybody was for him. That's not true."

In a June 11 interview, PBS's Jim Lehrer asked Clinton about Senator Chuck Hagel's assertion that the president has debased the currency of trust and that he'll never get it back. In response, Clinton said that "elements of the other party" have devoted the better part of the last seven years to "attacking me personally because they knew the American people agreed with my ideas." About his critics he said, "they have just been mad ever since I won because a lot of them really never believed there would be another Democrat in their lifetime." They are left with nothing but "personal attacks" when the country does well, "but that's not good for America. I don't attack them personally." The president went on to say that "on one occasion, much to my eternal regret, I gave them a little ammunition. But I have been trustworthy in my public obligations to the American people. And I have been trustworthy in my dealings with them."

In a March 31 interview with CBS's Dan Rather, the president declared that he wasn't troubled at all by the fact that he was impeached. "I do not regard this impeachment vote as some great badge of shame," he said. He then cast himself as a defender of the Constitution against those who would dishonor it. "I am honored that something that was indefensible was pursued and that I had the opportunity to defend the Constitution."

During a March 19 press conference, Clinton, when asked about his legacy of lying, said young people will learn from his experience that "even presidents have to" tell the truth. He then added this: "But I also think that there will be a box score, and there will be that one negative, and then there will be the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times when the record will show that I did not abuse my authority as president, that I was truthful with the American people; and scores and scores of allegations were made against me—most of them have already been actually proved false."

What is the president saying?

He made one minor mistake. The president insists

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the Lewinsky scandal was an isolated incident, a personal failure that was inappropriate but ultimately unimportant, and that it should certainly not affect how we view the rest of his presidency. (Clinton's reference to the Lewinsky scandal as "that one negative" calls to mind a comment by former Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry, who said that if you set aside the district's record high murder rate, it was a pretty safe city.)

The president of the United States had a squalid affair with a young intern. Instead of admitting to it, he lied repeatedly to his wife, daughter, aides, cabinet, party, lawyers, and countrymen. He sent out his defenders to spread his lies and attack those who told the truth. He dragged the country through impeachment hearings, divided the nation, and tarnished the presidency. Far from being an aberration, the Lewinsky scandal in many ways embodies Clinton's private and public character.

He has expressed his remorse. Last fall the president gave a speech in which he said he had sinned. In his mind that admission was sufficient. Now the matter should be closed; after all, it was time to move on.

It is now manifestly clear that last September, when the president spoke at the Prayer Breakfast, he was telling a poll-tested lie. He said on that occasion that his sorrow was genuine, he had repented, he was a man who possessed a broken spirit and was moved to deep contrition. Yet everything he has said and done since that speech has been (legally and politically) defiant. President Clinton has no remorse, no contrition, and no regrets, and, but for the dress, he would never have admitted the affair. In his apology the president was exploiting for his personal political advantage the language and symbols of Christian forgiveness.

The president is a victim of personal attacks by hateful right-wingers who resent him because he is among the century's most successful and progressive presidents. Bill Clinton portrays himself as a historic agent of change, comparable to Franklin Roosevelt, who has guided the nation through a difficult, challenging transition period. His critics are his critics not because of anything bad he has done, but because of all the good he has accomplished. He would have us believe that he is the victim of that famous "right-wing conspiracy," comprised of ideologues whose allegations are politically based and groundless.

The president is attempting to discredit responsible conservative critics by tying them to fanatics on the fringe. Of course Bill Clinton has a few irresponsible critics; so did Richard Nixon. So has every president. It doesn't follow that because some people make irresponsible charges against the chief executive, all charges made against him are irresponsible. The notion that most of the president's critics are driven by an irrational rage against this good and decent man is risible. It turns out that allegations made by his most prominent critics were demonstrably true and well grounded.

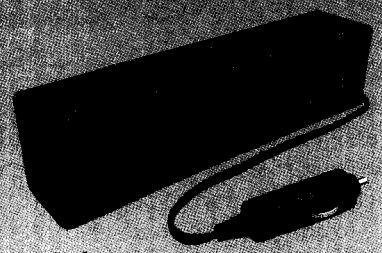
Nor is it plausible to argue that animus toward Clinton is ideologically driven, or that conservatives

Never let a dead car battery stall you again–go with...

Car Starter™

only $49.95*

***But read this ad for an even better deal!**



The sickening "click-click" of a dead car battery is the most discouraging sound a motorist can hear. You are stranded—sometimes for hours or in dangerous neighborhoods—or are dependent on the kindness of strangers, who might not even have jumper cables. And you know how dangerous jumper cables (and strangers!) can be.

This can never happen to you with *Car Starter*™, a portable power source that will charge your car battery in 15 minutes or less—just by plugging it into your cigarette lighter! After use, you can recharge the unit again, right through that same cigarette lighter. And that isn't all: You can use *Car Starter*™ to operate any and all 12-volt applicances, such as small TV sets (up to 16 hours), portable fridges, cellular phones (up to 100 hours), laptop computers, and much more. *Car Starter*™ has important, special, and unique features, such as high/low voltage indicator and built-in short-circuit protection.

• Car Starter™ *will keep its charge for years and will work in the most extreme hot/cold temperature conditions. Its output is an astonishing 7.5 amp-hs., incomparably higher than any competing unit.* Car Starter™ *measures just 8.5" x 2" x 2" and weighs only 27 oz. You should always keep it in your glove com-*

***And here is the "even better deal": Buy two *Car Starters*™ for $99.90 and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!** Don't ever again worry about a dead battery and a stalled car—give convenience and safety to yourself and your loved ones and order your Car Starter(s)™ today!

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or Visa/MasterCard. Please give order number #1071E846. Add $4.95 for one or $9.90 for three Car Starters™ ship./ins. and sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund postage.

since 1967 haverhills®
2360 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94107

✆ Order by toll-free phone: (800) 797-7367 or by fax: (415) 643-2818 ✆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deeply resent him for his success in advancing "progressive" ideas. For one thing, this cannot explain why many of the president's former top aides have been extraordinarily tough on the president's character, to the point of some of them saying that if they had known what kind of man Bill Clinton was they would never have gone to work for him. Nor can it explain why some of the most scorching criticisms came from congressional Democrats.

In addition, the Clinton presidency has been (at least in terms of public policy accomplishments) largely inconsequential. And arguably his most important policy act was to sign welfare reform legislation—which was an idea advanced by Republicans. The president has, on a number of fronts, moved the Democratic party in a more conservative direction. All of which is to say that Bill Clinton has earned the distrust and contempt he elicits not because of his "progressive" politics but because of his squalid acts.

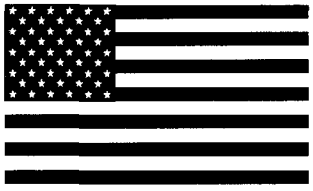
His enemies engage in the politics of personal destruction, something he refuses to do. The president preaches against "the politics of personal destruction," warns his political opponents that they are doing great damage to the country, and insists that he refuses to sink to their level.

The record shows that this administration employs vicious and intimidating tactics. The president and his defenders have regularly used private investigators against his accusers; savaged women with whom the president has had affairs; declared "war" on a duly appointed independent counsel; and made common cause with pornographer Larry Flynt in his effort to intimidate Republicans in Congress. Rather than standing against the "politics of personal destruction," they have made promiscuous use of it.

Bill Clinton is a defender of the Constitution and the presidency. This is the most fantastic claim of all, utterly self-delusional and completely severed from reality. The president of the United States lied in civil litigation, before a federal grand jury, and in response to questions posed by the House Judiciary Committee. He obstructed justice. He violated his oath to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed." He placed himself above the law. He did everything he could to obstruct Kenneth Starr's investigation. He subverted the Constitution and degraded the office of the presidency. These are stubborn facts which even Bill Clinton—a slick, glib, and accomplished rewriter of history—cannot change.

Peter Wehner is executive director for policy at Empower America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Latest report shows:

Dutch drug policy *even* more effective than previously thought!

Illegal drug use in the U.S. and the Netherlands (1997)

	EVER USED		USED PAST YEAR		USED PAST MONTH	
	USA	DUTCH	USA	DUTCH	USA	DUTCH
MARIJUANA	32.9	15.6	9.0	4.5	5.1	2.5
COCAINE	10.5	2.1	1.9	0.6	0.7	0.2
INHALANTS	5.7	0.5	1.1	0.1	0.4	too small to measure
HEROIN	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	too small to measure	too small to measure

Source U.S.: National Household Survey 1997 SAMHSA, Office of applied studies Washington, DC.
Source the Netherlands: M. Abraham, P. Cohen, M. DeWinter: Licit and Illicit drug use in the Netherlands, Center for Drug Research, University of Amsterdam.

"The Netherlands follows a strong public health approach to drug use. The Dutch do not normally arrest people for possession or distribution of small amounts of drugs, and even allow the sale of small amounts of marijuana from specialized shops. In addition to our research showing lower levels of drug use, the Netherlands' rate of incarceration is about 11% of the United States' as a result of these policies."

- Peter Cohen, Ph.D., Center for Drug Research, University of Amsterdam -

Can we learn from others?

Visit *Drug War Facts* at: http://www.drugsense.org/

Paid for by Common Sense for Drug Policy, Kevin B. Zeese, President
703-354-5694, 703-354-5695 (fax), info@csdp.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sometimes a Game Is Just a Game

By Fred Barnes

It was a heist, and Katie Couric was one of the thieves. Two days after the U.S. women's soccer team defeated China and won the World Cup, Couric interviewed several players on the *Today* show. She had other things on her mind besides soccer and the stirring victory over the Chinese. Couric wanted to know why Brandi Chastain, the player who kicked the winning goal and then tore off her shirt, had posed nude for *Gear* magazine. (The photo was so tame, with a soccer ball hiding Chastain's vital parts, that NBC flashed it on the screen.) "I'm wondering about some of the mixed signals that little girls may be getting," Couric said. "Do you feel completely comfortable with that, or should you tell me to lighten up?" Chastain chuckled, but Couric didn't lighten up.

The next question didn't have anything to do with soccer or the game with China either. Chastain's teammate Julie Foudy, Couric noted, had worn a bikini for a photo in *Sports Illustrated* of her running along the beach with her husband. Yes, the picture was "completely innocent," Couric said. "But I'm sure some hard-core feminists are gonna say, 'Wait a second. What's going on here?'" Foudy responded that the picture merely showed you could be both a woman and a strong athlete.

So what was stolen here? Only the game. It was a heart-pounding drama won by the American women on the very last kick, a magnificent victory by skillful, disciplined athletes. But Couric and the mainstream media became ideological ax-grinders and treated it as a political event—with political winners and losers. The winners, according to the pundits, were feminists, the feminist agenda, Title IX, the women's movement, women with corporate ambitions, androgynous women, and little girls who will now be emboldened to give up their Barbies and play soccer. The losers were men.

Even the 1973 tennis match between Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King, the famous gender grudge duel, was less politicized than the U.S. women's soccer triumph. The writers and commentators and chatterers were agreed: This was more than just a soccer game. On *Nightline*, Kevin Newman of ABC News insisted much more was involved than "simply soccer." And the players weren't just players. Cynthia McFadden, also of ABC News, called them "the heiresses of the women's movement." Jonathan Alter of *Newsweek* said the team represents "a new comfortable place for the women's movement."

The players were expected to be just like men, whether they liked it or not. Displaying femininity, as Chastain and Foudy had, was frowned upon. What thrilled the press was Chastain's act of tearing off her jersey once victory was sealed. She had done exactly what men do. It *was* a riveting moment, and it put Chastain, in her black sports bra, on the cover of *Newsweek* and *Sports Illustrated*. More important to the media, she met the androgynous ideal of women as men who can have babies: muscular, irreverent, aggressive. She was even entrepreneurial, having signed a contract with Nike. So it was Chastain and not Mia Hamm, who is married to a Marine, or Michelle Akers, a born-again Christian, who became the icon of the World Cup. Her lapse in posing for a men's magazine was overlooked.

During the penalty kicks, one ABC-TV announcer stumbled into political incorrectness. She said penalty kicks in women's soccer are all about placement because the women goalkeepers aren't athletic enough to stop a well-placed ball. In other words, they can't do what guy goalies sometimes can. The comment was followed by stony silence, as if someone had broken wind and everyone wanted to pretend it hadn't happened. Of course, an average male college team could beat the U.S. women. No one uttered that blasphemous fact. The preferred tack was captured by the oft-aired Nike ad with Hamm competing with Michael Jordan to the song (from *Annie Get Your Gun*) "Anything You Can Do."

In fact, the impression was left that women soccer

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

players are *better* than men, at least as team players and perhaps morally as well. They "taught the rest of us lessons," according to *Newsweek*. "In an era when the egos of male athletes are dwarfed only by their paychecks, the World Cup women, minimum wagers by pro-sports standards, reminded the country that sports superstars can be gracious and grateful." They "showed us leadership and teamwork—and they kicked butt." Which the U.S. men's soccer team didn't in the 1998 World Cup. But, again, an inconvenient fact was not mentioned. The American women's team faced weaker opponents. Women's soccer, unlike men's, is largely underdeveloped around the world.

In a way, the media dissed the American players. By stressing the "lessons" they supposedly taught and freighting them with a feminist agenda, reporters and commentators deemphasized their athletic skills and how they had honed them. Akers got attention for having bravely overcome a dozen knee operations, chronic fatigue syndrome, and other ailments, but other players got far less. How had veteran Kristine Lilly, who saved the final game by heading a Chinese shot out of the goal, stayed so good at soccer for so long? If this was analyzed, I missed it.

Walter looss Jr. / Sports Illustrated

The players were also diminished by the proselytizing for Title IX, the law requiring equal opportunity for women at schools that take federal funds. The media made it sound as if Title IX, not hard work and good coaching, had created the team and made it successful. *Time* labeled the players "daughters of Title IX." After the victory over China, Aaron Brown asserted on ABC's *World News Tonight*, "This is Title IX come of age." The next evening on ABC, Judy Muller claimed the U.S. team had sent a message to those who want to revise Title IX: "Not so fast, buddy."

The incessant rap about Title IX was only one example of the mixture of ignorance and make-believe that dominated the coverage of the World Cup. The truth is, Title IX did not create the soccer mania that has gripped American girls. At most, it has given them a few more college soccer teams to play for. American women have been great at soccer for decades now, emerging as world-class players during the 1970s and 1980s, when those who now credit Title IX for producing the 1999 champs were complaining that Title IX was not being enforced at all. The United States won the first women's World Cup, after all, in 1991. That team, ignored by the media, and even more obviously not the offspring of Title IX, was more dominant than this year's squad.

Yet, somehow, the media came to the conclusion the victory in 1999 constituted a sudden, meaningful breakthrough for women's sports and women in general. ABC's Judy Muller proclaimed: "This team on this day in this place forever changed the way we think about women in sports." Well, maybe it changed the way she thinks. Former congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, said the women's soccer team had exploded the conventional wisdom that women can play individual sports (tennis, golf) but not team sports. Frankly, I'd never heard of this conventional wisdom before. In any case, my question is, where have these people been? Certainly not hanging around playgrounds all over the country, where the breakthrough in girls' sports, especially soccer, occurred a long time ago. The enthusiasm for the 1999 women's team is the crest of a wave that has been building for many years.

I know. I've seen soccer mania at my own house. One of my daughters began playing soccer in 1983 at age 8, another in 1988 at age 6. They joined teams set up by the local soccer association in Arlington, Virginia, a private group not subject to Title IX. Then they went on to play on select teams that competed around the Washington, D.C., area. Finally, they played on high school varsity teams. The only games they saw on TV were tapes I acquired, with considerable difficulty, of the 1991 women's team's drive to the World Cup. They never heard of Title IX. The rise of women's soccer isn't new, it simply happened outside the media's field of vision.

One of the favorite tropes of the media was that "little girls" were galvanized by the American team's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

triumphant run in 1999. This was at least a fresh angle, basically a claim that not only was the women's team rising to new heights, but that millions of fans were having a life-changing experience. How could anyone know this? No one could. Nevertheless, ABC flashed frequently to girls in the stands during the China game, and announcer Robin Roberts kept citing the alleged effect all of this was having on young girls across America. *Newsweek* predicted "a Mary Lou Retton Effect" after the gymnast who won gold medals in the 1984 Olympics and prompted many girls to try gymnastics. But what we have in soccer is a reverse Retton effect. The rush of girls to soccer preceded, and helped prompt, the media's discovery of the sport. More than 7 million women play soccer in America, most of them under 18.

Howard Schatz for July/August issue of Gear Magazine

By minimizing the importance of the U.S.-China game itself, the press missed the best story. My guess is the reporters and talking heads knew little about soccer and weren't much interested in learning. That's sad, because American women play soccer with amazing dexterity and panache. They're much more exciting to watch than men, if only because their game is more wide-open and offense-oriented. *Time* noted this, but still got it only half right. "While professional women soccer players are no match for the men in skill levels," the magazine said, "their game is great entertainment."

Actually, it's in mastering the skills of soccer that women *do* match men. Women play the game at a remarkable level of proficiency. They're just not as big and strong and fast and aggressive as men, and thus do not play with as much power. They're comparable to tennis stars Steffi Graf and Lindsay Davenport, who are marvelously talented players and fun to watch, but who wouldn't stand a chance against Pete Sampras or any male on the pro tennis circuit. The inescapable (and happy) fact is that women are just not men. And no amount of media pretending can change that, even in the case of as wonderful a group of athletes as the American women's soccer team. ♦

THE MYTH OF TITLE IX

By David Tell

Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments Act prohibited gender discrimination in school programs receiving federal financial assistance. But on the question whether its requirements applied to school-sponsored sports, which then as now generally received only *indirect* federal aid, the new law and its limited legislative history were entirely silent. Neither did the legislation make clear precisely how or under what circumstances it would be enforced by the executive branch. Nor whether it granted private citizens a right to sue for monetary damages when they felt victimized on account of gender. One thing about Title IX was certain, however: Compliance with its maddeningly vague terms would not be commanded until the end of a three-year grace period, in 1975.

That year, as the clock wound down, federal education officials finally proposed, and Congress approved without comment, a set of implementing regulations for Title IX. They were complicated and confusing, and they delayed the onset of enforced compliance for another three-year grace period, until 1978. In 1979, having received a torrent of panicked questions from colleges and high schools about what exactly they were supposed to do, particularly with respect to their sports programs, the Education Department issued what appeared to be a notably relaxed "policy interpretation" of its 1975 regulations. Schools could satisfy

David Tell is opinion editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Title IX by providing varsity athletic opportunities to women at rates "substantially proportionate" to their campus-wide enrollment. Or by demonstrating a "history and continuing practice" of expanded opportunities. Or by fully accommodating the "abilities and interests" of female athletes. Take your pick.

College sports were largely exempted from even these loose strictures by a 1984 Supreme Court ruling that Title IX, as written, applied only to programs enjoying direct federal support. In 1988, Congress enacted a revision of the law that made explicit its coverage of post-secondary-school athletics. But at that point, the end of the boom-time 1980s, during which university sports budgets had grown for men and women both, few schools had difficulty reaching the second Title IX "safe harbor" provided by the Education Department's policy interpretation: a "history and continuing practice" of expanded opportunities for women.

So by 1991, nearly twenty years after Title IX was born, the law, by itself, could claim virtually no practical effect on the gender landscape of American athletics. In Title IX's entire history, the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, which theoretically guaranteed gender non-discrimination in the sports programs at thousands of institutions, had initiated a grand total of *three* formal school-specific reviews. And it had never come close to punishing even a single school—by withholding its federal aid—for failing to do right by female athletes.

As our current decade dawned, then, activists on behalf of those athletes were without exception bitterly disappointed over Title IX and its application. "In many ways, we have not made any real progress since the mid-1970s," complained Ellen Vargyas of the National Women's Law Center. "Title IX has never been enforced," was the rueful conclusion of Donna Lopiano, then women's athletic director at the University of Texas (and now executive director of the Women's Sports Foundation). In April 1991, Lopiano told the *Chicago Tribune* that Title IX had simply become "a joke."

Eight months later, a supremely talented U.S. national squad demolished its international competition to win the first-ever women's World Cup of soccer. Title IX could not possibly have had anything to do with the team's success, and no one—*literally no one*—claimed otherwise. In fact, hardly anyone, in the press or anywhere else, even noticed that they'd won.

This year, this month, everyone is noticing, of course. Famously, this time, the American women's team has again won the World Cup. And "again" is exactly the right word for it. Seven of this year's eleven starters, all of them suddenly household names, also played in the 1991 championship. Michelle Akers, Brandi Chastain, Joy Fawcett, Julie Foudy, Mia Hamm, Kristine Lilly, and Carla Overbeck all joined the U.S. national squad as teenagers in the 1980s—Title IX's "dark ages." Before being selected as the nation's finest soccer players, each of them had received her most extensive and important coaching not in high school, but in an independent, volunteer-staffed youth "select" league—a sports program, that is, outside even the nominal scope of Title IX. They were and are, without question, great, dominating athletes. And no law made them so.

Only you would never know that from the broadcast or print coverage. Donna Lopiano and Donna de Varona—founder of the Women's Sports Foundation and chair of the World Cup organizing committee—are now everywhere identifying the U.S. women as "Title IX soccer players" whose triumph would have been all but impossible without that beautiful legislation. A rather insulting judgment, you would think. Also, a nonsensical one, given that the very same soccer players produced the very same triumph eight years ago, back when Lopiano and de Varona themselves thought Title IX a toothless sham.

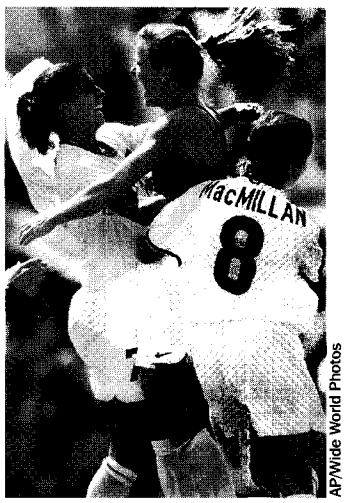
Here, though, combined in a tight ball, we have three of the national pundit industry's very weakest subjects: feminism, sports, and the law. And so, in the echo chamber of its own ignorance, and in its own voice, the news business has unanimously amplified a piece of truly outlandish historical revisionism. *Newsweek*'s Jonathan Alter on MSNBC: "We are learning this week that the triumph of women's team sports is the result of something called Title IX." NBC *Today* anchor John Palmer: "As the father of three daughters, I can only say three cheers for Title IX and women's soccer." Elizabeth Kaledin of CBS News: "Sports-playing girls everywhere can thank a law called Title IX." The *Washington Post*'s Ann Gerhart: Brandi Chastain's black Nike sports bra "is the cloth symbol of Title IX's success." And so on, to infinity and beyond.

The eagerness with which these people have swallowed and circulated such abject mythology might otherwise be laughable. If, that is, the mythology itself had not been consciously designed to obscure a serious and rather sinister reality, one of the decade's most underreported stories. The reality is this: In the late 1990s, Title IX is no longer a toothless sham, but a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

genuinely deadly legal weapon. And that weapon is not producing a renaissance of women's sports generally, any more than it produced Mia Hamm and Brandi Chastain in particular. (A quarter-century-long cultural transformation of American gender relations and expectations seems most responsible for that.) Instead, in the hands of private litigants and federal judges, in a process ruthlessly spun and propagandized by ideologues like the Donnas de Varona and Lopiano, Title IX is now producing a wholesale slaughter of collegiate-level and Olympic-specialty athletic programs for men.

In 1992, after hearing the appeal of a high school sex-harassment lawsuit out of Georgia, the Supreme Court at last resolved the question whether Title IX authorized the award of actual monetary damages and attorney's fees to private litigants. It did, the justices ruled. Beginning the following year, in the first cases involving college sports programs to be decided under these new rules, a series of federal circuit courts—contrary to all standard jurisprudential analysis—elevated the Education Department's 1979 Title IX policy interpretation to the status of law. And while they were at it, the courts effectively rewrote that document to radically shrink the compliance safe harbors previously available to university administrators.



AP/Wide World Photos

In each instance, the mere existence of a lawsuit brought by female athletes was assumed to defeat a school's claim that it was accommodating the "abilities and interests" of all its students. Similarly, women's sports teams created in the 1970s and 1980s were deemed irrelevant to a "history and *continuing practice*" of expanded gender opportunity. A college was obliged instead to fund new teams on a constant basis. Otherwise, so long as its female students remained proportionally underrepresented among varsity athletes, any post-secondary school in the country was presumptively in violation of Title IX and faced mammoth financial liability in potential litigation. Many campuses were confronted with this problem—and many still are. At the end of the 1998-99 academic year, six years after the rigid Title IX numbers test was established by the courts, only ten of the nation's more than 300 NCAA Division I colleges and universities have managed to get their statistics in balance.

All the rest are desperate. Any school that wants to retain its revenue-generating football program starts the exercise with at least 100 "too many" male athletes. The vast majority of major colleges already offer the most popular women's sports, so to boost their varsity female totals, a fair number of them, with the NCAA's connivance, have begun conferring full "team" status on exotic hobbies or outright trivia. New horseback riding and women's bowling "programs" have been the fashion for some time now. This year's model, according to a darkly hilarious *Wall Street Journal* story in May, is women's crew—inaugurated even on the water-starved, desert campus of Arizona State University, with a team composed entirely of novice oarspeople.

Except that very few rising college freshwomen around the country actually *want* to row a boat. And many American universities cannot find enough women for the sports-team rosters they already have—let alone afford to create still more of them. Faced with bad gender numbers and the concomitant threat of a lawsuit, then, what is a school to do?

Start lopping off its "surplus" of male athletes by killing the teams they play for, that's what. Since 1993, according to figures compiled by the Independent Women's Forum, more than 50 NCAA-sanctioned men's golf programs have died at colleges and universities across the country. Twenty-three swimming and diving programs—including UCLA's legendary Olympic training camp—have disappeared. Thirty-nine men's tennis teams have been disbanded. A total of 90 track and cross country programs have been suspended. Wrestling, already fragile, has vanished from 43 schools. Even baseball—at schools where it has been played for 100 years—has not proved immune. Cumulatively, upwards of 20,000 men's varsity positions have gone extinct this way between 1992 and 1997, according to the NCAA. Tens of thousands more will inevitably follow.

All in the service of a highly questionable, judicially imposed, bean-counting fetish over abstract "gender equity." *This* is Title IX's true, modern, remorseless face, not our women's soccer team. Until the law is dramatically amended by Congress—or somehow restored to sanity by a successful legal challenge—American athletics will face no greater peril. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THIRTY YEARS OF INEPTITUDE

Time to Rescue Space Exploration from NASA

By Robert G. Oler, Richard Kolker, and Mark Whittington

WHAT IF IT HAD HAPPENED LIKE THIS? It's July 20, 1969. Man has just landed on the moon. A teary-eyed Walter Cronkite turns to the camera and says, "This is the way it will be for American spaceflight in the next 30 years. Over the next five years America will junk the rockets that took it to the moon. In their place it will build a shuttle system that is more expensive to operate. By 1999, that system will require $4 billion a year to fly about four times a year. By 1999, the entire American space program will have spent nearly $30 billion to put a pair of cans into orbit and call it a space station. By July 1999, there will be no date set for the station's completion, and $100 billion will still be needed to finish it. The station's main mission, at that point, will be merely to put two Americans in low earth orbit."

If Cronkite had made that prediction, saying in effect that the American space program would go backward instead of forward, would we have believed him? Certainly not. When we reached the moon just seven years after President Kennedy threw America's hat over the wall of space, most Americans envisioned this as the glorious beginning of an era in which we would be utterly changed by our ability to explore the heavens. Instead, as we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of man's landing on the moon, the "space age" is just about over.

As it turns out, the rockets that took us to the moon were scrapped. The space shuttle system is almost a complete failure. The space station is a pointless and fantastically expensive digression from its original mission. These failures, however, teach an important lesson: The effort to reach new frontiers may be supported by government, but it can only be carried out by free enterprise. Government didn't take the airplane, microcomputer, and satellite communications from mere curiosities to everyday necessities. And yet, transferring the space program from the bureaucratic precincts of government to the creative instincts of the private sector has not even begun.

Robert G. Oler, Richard Kolker, and Mark Whittington are senior policy analysts for the Clear Lake Group, a space policy research organization in Houston, Texas.

President Reagan proposed the space station in his State of the Union address of 1984, using NASA's assumptions that it would cost $8 billion, make possible major discoveries in eight fields of science, and be completed by 1992. Since 1984, the purpose and design of the station have been vastly scaled down, resulting in the incomplete version we now have hanging around in low earth orbit, which only began to get off the ground in December 1998. Only two of the almost 40 main parts have been installed, while the station's total costs, according to Congressional Budget Office estimates, have ballooned to over $100 billion. The station has not yet carried out a single scientific experiment. Meanwhile, its missions have been reduced to only one and the completion date is well into 2005.

Also in 1984, Space Industries, a company in Houston, Texas, headed by former astronaut Joseph Allen, found a way to put up a space station that would produce benefits in just a couple of years. This should have been a welcome opportunity to research the manufacture of various types of drugs, chemicals, and alloys. Which is how Congress, which tried to foist the plan onto NASA, saw it.

The station Space Industries proposed to build and put into space, the Industrial Space Facility (ISF), would have allowed the shuttle to "drop off" experiments for long periods of time and then retrieve them. ISF would not have been manned, but it would have been visited by shuttle and monitored from the ground. Even if it had cost twice as much and taken twice as long as predicted, it would have cost less than the country has spent, on average, in two years on NASA's space station. In short, Space Industries's ISF was an elegant solution to the problems that later undermined NASA's space station.

Unfortunately, the strong possibility of being shown up by the private sector and a desire to protect

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its turf led NASA to resist the ISF plan. But what really doomed this idea was that ISF would have been owned and run by Space Industries. NASA, like other customers, would simply have leased space on it for government functions. That brought home an important truth about the American space program: NASA opposes what it doesn't run and own.

Like the space station, the space shuttle system has been crippled by NASA's incompetence and big-government mindset. In 1982, the press kit for NASA's third space shuttle flight predicted that by 1992 the shuttle would have flown over "400 times carrying payloads for military, scientific, and private industry customers." The absurdity of NASA trying to provide regular services to private and government customers was universally missed—except by NASA's actual customers who found that NASA, though it offered its services at government-subsidized rates, could not deliver them frequently enough.

The *Challenger* disaster in 1986 ended NASA's role as a launch provider. But by then, most of its customers (including other government agencies) were already heading for the door anyway. Today, NASA provides launch services only to itself and its international partners on the space station. The shuttle system that was supposed to fly 51 times a year when it was sold to the nation in 1972 will this year fly only 4 times. Had NASA been a business and the shuttle its product, it would have folded long ago. But with an endless supply of tax dollars, NASA simply morphed again.

Already in 1982, NASA began to shift from research and development (where risk is an acceptable factor) into "operations" (where risk is minimized) for the simple reason that a bureaucracy requires constant funding and legislators are reluctant to shut down operational programs. Jobs are spread out over many key states, and it is easy to claim that the "next mission" will do outstanding things. NASA routinely hints that it is going to discover cures for dreaded diseases or produce some miracle alloy that will revolutionize our society. Some NASA officials even boast that for every dollar spent, nine or ten—some have even claimed fifteen—dollars go back to the federal treasury.

Multipliers of this nature require proof of value enhancement to be credible. But after almost 20 years of flying the space shuttle, not a single significant scientific or medical process has been discovered or perfected in space. No significant product of any kind has been produced in space. NASA's complete failure to make any progress in its scientific work is all the more remarkable because so few people seem to be shocked by it.

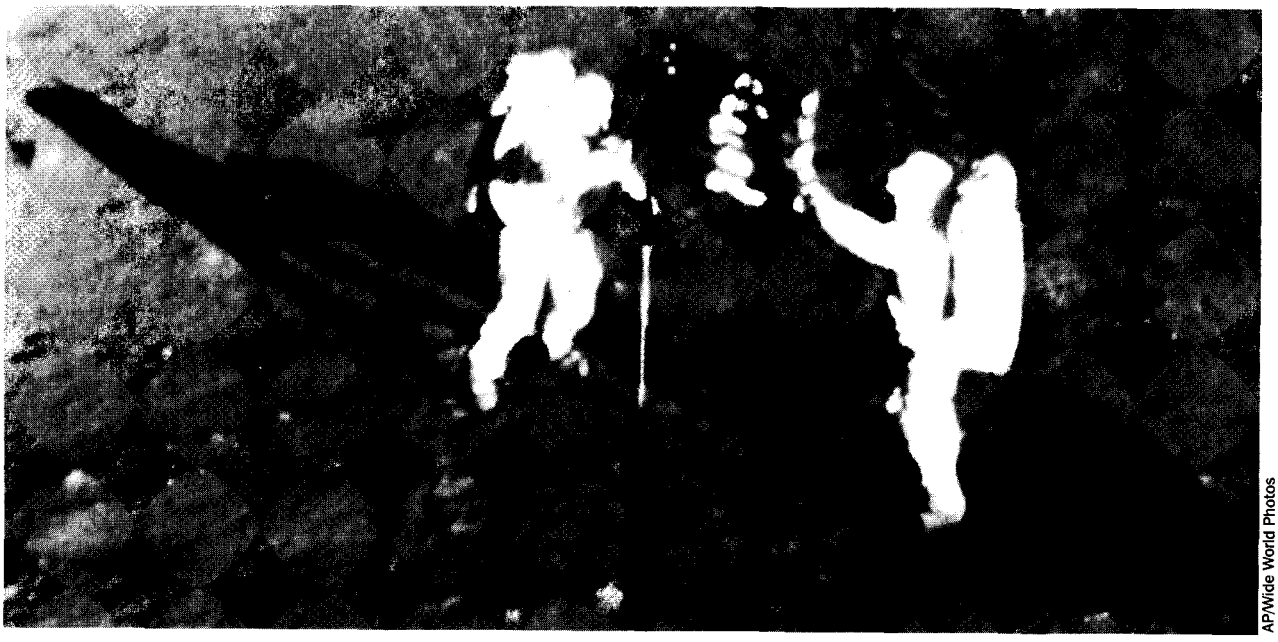
Furthermore, the servicing of satellites, once the shuttle's raison d'être, has been abandoned. In the meantime, American companies have been shut out of the market for satellite-launching service. By 1982, the NASA shuttle was the only way to launch satellites from the United States. But the cost was prohibitively high. So, American customers turned to European companies for launching services. After *Challenger*, it was possible for American companies to offer launch services, but by then the profitable business of carrying communications satellites into orbit was dominated by overseas companies.

In almost 20 years, neither the space shuttle nor the space station has accomplished a single thing promised. NASA's space program has only ruined industries and handicapped national policy. America does not have a national airline, has turned away from a national health care plan, and today looks to privatize schools, air traffic control, and half a dozen other government functions. And yet, we continue to keep civilian space operations under NASA, one of the most dysfunctional government agencies going.

Not even the private sector contractors working under NASA seem to know anything about "freedom" or "enterprise." Lockheed Martin was awarded the contract to build the X-33 demonstrator for the proposed new space shuttle. Lockheed promised that after the demonstrator was built, it would pay for and build the new space shuttle, which would have required Lockheed to find customers for it. But since the new shuttle is, like the first shuttle 20 years ago, a high-technology, high-risk vehicle that has almost no chance of operating as cheaply or as often as promised, Lockheed decided it would be better if the government also got into the act of paying for the vehicle. So now, Sen. John Breaux of Louisiana is pushing a bill, the Space Launch Cost Reduction Act, that would create loan guarantees for Lockheed's work on the new shuttle.

Peter Teets, president and CEO of Lockheed Martin, wrote in a June 21, 1999, letter to *Space News* that these loan guarantees "do not directly obligate government dollars." True, but if Lockheed's vehicle,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



AP/Wide World Photos

Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin plant the American flag on the moon, July 20, 1969.

like the shuttle system before it, fails to meet its goals and cannot attract customers, then the American taxpayer, not Lockheed, will pick up the tab. There is no balance between risk and reward here. Lockheed wants the government to insulate it against the consequences of a business failure. Teets has no intention of putting his firm or his stockholders at risk, but he is comfortable risking taxpayers' money. NASA does it all the time. VentureStar (Lockheed's name for its space shuttle) is for all intents and purposes corporate welfare held together with pork barrel politics.

By contrast, businessman Andrew Beal has decided that there is money to be made in launching communications satellites. So in and near Dallas, Texas, he has assembled a team and is building a brand new rocket that will cost a little over $200 million—peanuts by NASA standards—to develop. Beal is not asking for taxpayers' money. He is not asking for government loans. He is spending his own money.

Beal's rocket may or may not work; it may successfully go into orbit—or explode. Beal has determined that the risk is worth taking. The possibility of success in such ventures has always been the catalyst for change in the technological and cultural history of this country. It creates new infrastructure that spontaneously multiplies, generating jobs that produce wealth. And if Beal fails? The taxpayers are not short a dime. The ones who lose are Beal and the team he has assembled for his project.

Imagine now a federal space policy that actually encouraged free enterprise. Imagine a space platform launched into orbit by privately operated vehicles and Americans transported to and from the platform on those same vehicles. Technically this is not very radical stuff 40 years after humans first flew in space.

Economically, it would be revolutionary. Just as contracts to carry the mail anchored the fledgling airlines of the early part of this century, government contracts could anchor the launch industry of the next. Free enterprise with modest government support could mean the difference between the failed space program we have now and the great space explorations of tomorrow.

That NASA and its favored contractors have only their own interests at heart is not surprising. What is troubling is that many in the GOP who have poured scorn, justly, on plans for a national health care system ignore their own free market principles when it comes to human spaceflight. And so, every year, without fail, NASA gets its money, makes new promises, and proceeds to break them.

We are faced with a choice between summoning a better future and prolonging a mediocre present wrought by an incompetent NASA monopoly. That we should now flinch from saying, *Unleash the can-do spirit and bring on the glory of new frontiers!* would most certainly have seemed a travesty to the America that first threw its cap over the wall of space. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion.

Earlier this year, we published our message, "Arabian Fables (I)", in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians" and of the "West Bank" and the mythical concept of "occupied territories". In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths?

Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality of course is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millenium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

As to "East Jerusalem": There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, there was never in history an "East Jerusalem", let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem".

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemakers or worse.

The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so of course is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem".

"Settlements". When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, following the invasion of the newly-formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area "judenrein" (free of Jews) – the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements", with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goaded by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody considers the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace.

The term "settlements", too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs.

> "The Arab propaganda machine has created myths that have been accepted by much of the world. No peace in the Middle East is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are!"

"Refugees". In 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state in order to destroy it on the very day of its birth, broadcasts by the advancing Arab armies appealed to the resident Arabs to leave their homes so as not to be in the way of the invaders. As soon as the "quick victory" was won, they could return to their homes and would also enjoy the loot from the Jews, who would have been driven into the sea. It didn't turn out quite that way. Those Arabs who, despite the urgings of the Jews to stay and to remain calm, foolishly left, became refugees. Those who decided not to yield to those blandishments are now, and have been for over 50 years, citizens of Israel, with all the same rights and privileges as their Jewish fellows.

But what happened to those refugees – by best estimates about 600,000 of them? Did their "Arab brethren" allow them to settle in their countries, to work, and to become productive citizens and useful members of their societies? No! They kept and still keep them, their children, their grandchildren, and in some cases even their great-grandchildren, in miserable "refugee camps", so that they can be used as political and military pawns in order to keep the burning hatred against Israel alive and in order to supply the manpower for the unremitting fight against Israel.

During those more than fifty years, Israel has taken in more than three million Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and has integrated them productively into its society. According to the "Palestinians", the Arab "refugees" have now marvelously increased to five million(!). It is the intent and fervent desire of the Arabs that all of them should return to Israel so as to destroy the country without the necessity of war.

The "refugees" are a red herring and another myth created by the Arab propaganda machine.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by dint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

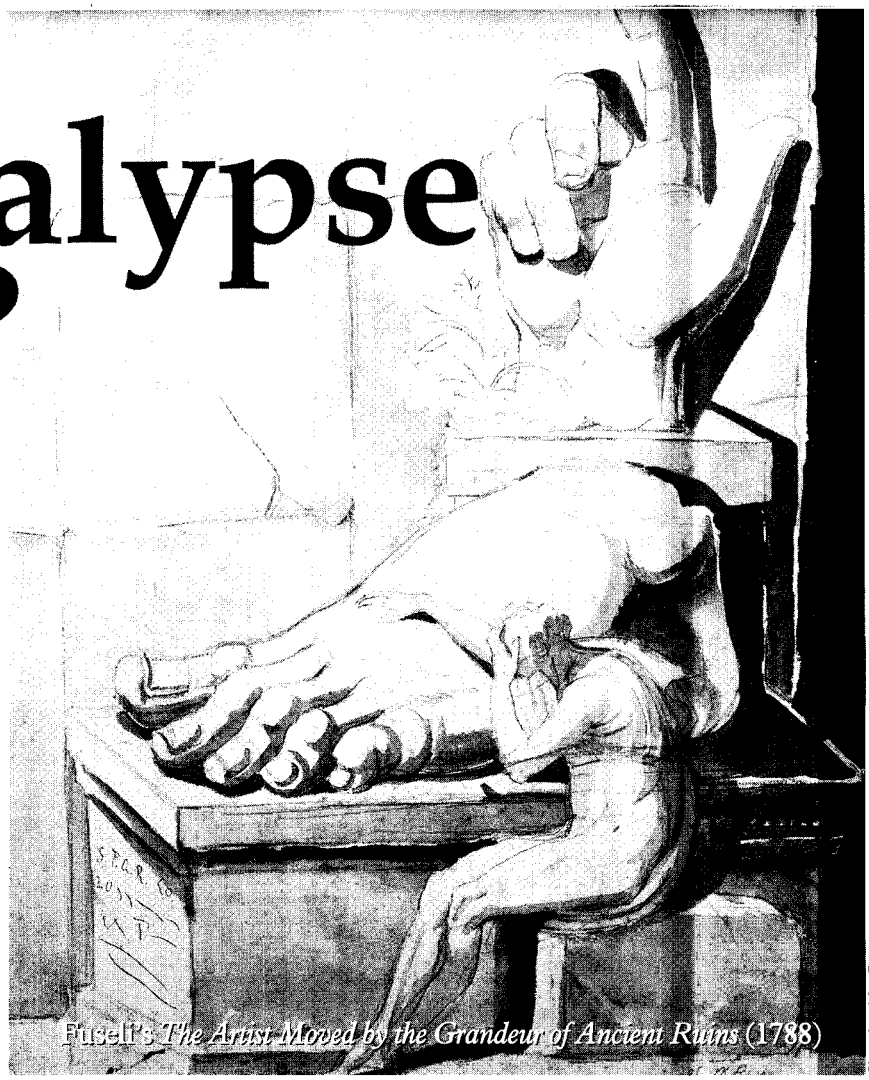
FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Apocalypse Now?

The Political Vision of Alasdair MacIntyre

By Adam Wolfson



Fuseli's *The Artist Moved by the Grandeur of Ancient Ruins* (1788)

Giraudon / Art Resource

In 1981, a small book appeared from a university press that looked at the modern world and saw nothing but disarray. Indeed, in the author's view, morality as such had nearly vanished, and the collapse of intelligible moral discourse marked a serious "degeneration" and "cultural loss." Arguing that a "new dark ages" had fallen upon us, he claimed we are under the governance of "barbarians." And, in an odd little concluding chapter in which he pointed out a curious parallel in the thought of St. Benedict and Leon Trotsky, he suggested that the only solution is quarantine, a breaking up of the world into small local communities in which civility might be preserved. Only a new St. Benedict—or a new Trotsky—can possibly save us.

The book was called *After Virtue*, and it might have faded away unnoticed: yet another unremarkable tome in the long line of conservative laments for lost worlds and yet another conservative demand that we flee to the distant mountains and escape the decadent last days of a collapsing culture. It might have faded away—except that its author was Alasdair MacIntyre, the man who is possibly the greatest moral philosopher of the last fifty years and certainly the most unyielding critic of liberalism writing today. Since 1981, *After Virtue* has been the most widely discussed book of philosophy in English—not just among philosophers, but among general readers across America. You can violently disagree with MacIntyre, as many do, particularly on the socialist left. Or you can violently agree with him, as many do, particularly on the Catholic right. But you can't get away without knowing about him.

Adam Wolfson is executive editor of the Public Interest.

ALASDAIR C. MACINTYRE
The MacIntyre Reader
edited by Kevin Knight
Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 308 pp., $40

The publication of the new *MacIntyre Reader*—a fascinating anthology of his work from his Marxist beginnings to his Thomistic conclusions—provides an interesting opportunity for reconsidering the man's thought. There are conservatives, of course, who still mourn the loss of the old world and still urge us to flee an America that has become indistinguishable from Gomorrah. But what about those conservatives who believe in the continuing possibilities of liberal democracy and the fruits of Enlightenment culture? What, finally, are we who still want to applaud the American Founding to make of Alasdair MacIntyre?

A renowned teacher, MacIntyre is celebrated by his students and influential far beyond his own discipline. Born in Scotland in 1929, he grew up in a small farming and fishing community. As a young man, he prepared himself for the Presbyterian ministry, but he soon became estranged from religion, only to return to it much later in life via Catholicism. In the interim, he became first a Marxist and then a Trotskyist, writing penetrating essays on Marx, Freud, and Marcuse, and in the field of analytical philosophy. In 1970, he moved to America, marking the start of his philosophical conversion from Trotskyist to Aristotelian to Thomist.

MacIntyre has written five outstanding works in moral philosophy, *A Short History of Ethics* in 1966, *After Virtue* in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1981, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* in 1988, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* in 1990, and *Dependent Rational Animals* in 1999. His books in philosophy are, as one reviewer said, more like "volcanoes and whirlpools" than academic treatises. To call him interdisciplinary—which he certainly is, with a background in sociology, the classics, and philosophy—does him a disservice. For alongside his analyses of Aristotle or Hume on the virtues, one finds literary criticism, interpretations of Heidegger, Nietzsche, and Weber, asides on funerary inscriptions and Icelandic sagas, anthropological insights, even discussions of what dolphins and humans have in common. These disparate elements are all carefully sifted through MacIntyre's highly tuned historical sense.

What most makes MacIntyre a man to be reckoned with, however, is his intransigent rejection of liberalism. He was one of the first to demonstrate that while liberalism sells itself today as a doctrine of neutrality, it in fact imposes its values of radical autonomy and individualism on nearly everything it touches.

But to say that MacIntyre opposes liberal individualism is not to say that he is anti-humanist. Quite the contrary: He argues that liberalism itself has become the leading agent of anti-humanism in the modern world. This insight is most apparent at the edges of life, in birth and death, where liberalism promotes a regime of abortion and euthanasia. We are not, according to MacIntyre, independent rational agents, as liberalism's leading expositors claim, but vulnerable and dependent beings; thus, the handicapped should not be seen as the "Other," but as enduring a condition that, if only in our aging, we shall all come to know intimately.

MacIntyre has put liberalism to the test, and his adversaries know it. When he wrote the sequel to *After Virtue*, the *New York Review of Books* and the *New Republic* called upon their heaviest hitters to knock it down. Meanwhile, many conservatives defend MacIntyre, the former Marxist, as one of their own.

That poses, however, the question of the extent to which he is actually a conservative. Unlike another famous former Trotskyist, Irving Kristol, MacIntyre was not exactly "mugged by reality." When Kristol abandoned Marxism, he also abandoned his hostility to liberal capitalism, even giving it, famously, "two cheers." MacIntyre, in contrast, has neither reconciled himself to liberal modernity nor abandoned the Marxist critique of liberalism. As he said in a 1991 interview, "The Marxist understanding of liberalism as ideological, as a deceiving and self-deceiving mask of social interests, remains compelling."

For both conservatives and liberals, it was *After Virtue* that put MacIntyre on the map—though, curiously, the book was initially greeted with greater warmth on the left than on the right. The *New York Review of Books* called it "a striking work" and praised it for its "passion." The *New Republic* declared it a "surprising and important new book," even "spellbinding." Even more surprising, *Newsweek* took it up, explaining to its popular magazine audience that the complex work was a "stunning new study of ethics." More conservative publications kept their distance, with the *American Scholar*, then under the editorship of Joseph Epstein, condemning the book and the *Economist* calling parts of it "rather far fetched."

THE ENLIGHTENMENT SUBVERTED TRADITION IN THE HOPE THAT REASON WOULD PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE. INSTEAD, IT LED TO MORAL CONFLICT, RELATIVISM, AND EVENTUALLY NIHILISM.

As Princeton professor Robert George points out, the generally friendly reception of *After Virtue* derived from the book's publication at an opportune moment. For nearly a decade, Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* had reigned over philosophy departments like a colossus. But discontent with Rawls's pat welfare-state philosophy—prompted by such alternative visions as communitarianism, postmodernism, and gender feminism—had begun to emerge. MacIntyre's *After Virtue* seemed to many at the time—with its apocalyptic, almost postmodern tone—one such alternative.

MacIntyre began the book by asking readers to imagine that several environmental catastrophes have convulsed and ravaged the world. Blaming scientists for the trouble, people destroy laboratories, burn scientific books, and lynch physicists; eventually a Know-Nothing party comes to power and bans all teaching of the sciences. Although order is later restored, and a scientific revival takes place, it fails because nobody knows any longer what science *really* is. People might invoke key scientific terms, but they have utterly lost sight of the presuppositions, the social and intellectual context, that gave meaning to them.

The point of MacIntyre's thought experiment—which as many readers have noted bears an uncanny resemblance to Walter M. Miller's science-fiction classic, *A Canticle For Leibowitz*—was to advance the hypothesis that

> In the actual world which we inhabit the language of morality is in the same state of grave disorder as the language of natural science in the imaginary world which I described. What we possess, if this view is true, are the fragments of a conceptual scheme, parts which now lack those contexts from which their significance derived. We possess indeed simulacra of morality, we continue to use many of the key expressions. But we have—very largely, if not entirely—lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality.

How this happened is a very complicated tale, but it is fair to say that in MacIntyre's view the cause of our moral decay rests squarely on the scrawny shoulders of the liberal Enlightenment, which made several valiant, but failed, attempts to set morality on a universal rational basis. Bentham and his utilitarian followers tried to do it by deriving morality from human psychology; Kant and his followers in the school of analytic philosophy tried to do it by deriving morality from human rationality. All

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such attempts failed, argues MacIntyre, with the unhappy result that a third moral theory prevailed in the West: emotivism. This theory holds that all moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference, and MacIntyre carefully traces its development in the thought of such moral philosophers as G.E. Moore, R.M. Hare, and C.L. Stevenson. He also shows that it has become embedded in certain social types and now defines our culture.

The result is a culture in which moral debate never ends because there is no rational way of securing consensus. One person, appealing to some tradition of natural right or law, declares: "There's a right to life!" While another, perhaps appealing to some notion of human autonomy, shouts back: "There's a right to choice!" The two sides share no premises with each other. Both sides appeal to some rational standard, but the starting point for both, according to MacIntyre, is irrational decisionism. Just as one cannot, in an emotivist culture, appeal to some transcendent standard to settle the debate between life and choice, one cannot provide convincing reasons to oneself. The emotivist culture reduces the pro-life position to one more instance of irrational decisionism, of blind preference, even if it contains rational arguments. The emotivist culture makes nihilists of us all.

One of the most frightening aspects of MacIntyre's book is its claim that Nietzsche was right about modern liberal regimes. MacIntyre calls Nietzsche "*the* moral philosopher of the present age" and one of the "genuine theoretical alternatives" available to modern men. If one agrees with MacIntyre that ours is an emotivist culture, then the Nietzschean logic does seem to follow. All the Enlightenment efforts to ground morality, either in natural right, or the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or the categorical imperative, or the moral sentiments, turn out to be fictions. The unmasking of morality as Will to Power leads to the conclusion that it is up to truly superior specimens, supermen, to move beyond good and evil, to become self-conscious creators of new "moralities."

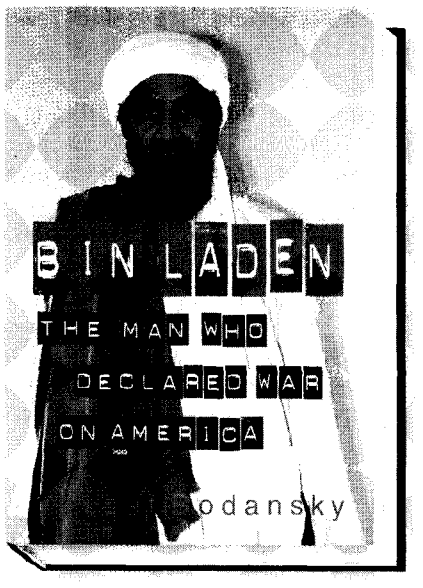
Here one can see why *After Virtue* appealed to today's Nietzscheanized left. MacIntyre clearly wants no part of the liberal Enlightenment, comparing the belief in natural rights to "belief in witches and in unicorns." MacIntyre boldly asserts, pace Thomas Jefferson and our Declaration of Independence, "there are no self-evident truths."

Where MacIntyre parts company with the left, however, is on the question of whether our only choice is liberal rationalism or Nietzschean self-creation. In his view, a Third Way is open: returning to the ancients, in particular Aristotle. But what no doubt really soured the left on MacIntyre was his turn, after the publication of *After Virtue*, to St. Thomas Aquinas (not to mention MacIntyre's conversion to Catholicism). How else can one explain the fact that the left responded to his subsequent works, which largely completed the project begun in *After Virtue*, with extreme vitriol? Stephen Holmes, in the *New Republic*, accused MacIntyre of "deceptive sobriety," "sonorous preaching," "baffling inconsistency," "moral polygamy," and much else besides.

The starting point for the two main sequels to *After Virtue* is again the claim that contemporary societies are rent by moral and political disputes to which no solution can be found. The liberal Enlightenment subverted tradition and authority—which once provided answers—in the hope that naked reason would provide the necessary alternative. But instead, the Enlightenment yielded numerous standards, leading to interminable moral conflict, then relativism, and eventually nihilism.

MacIntyre attempts to solve this problem of the liberal Enlightenment in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* by unearthing "an alternative mode of understanding," which he calls "the rationality of traditions." The turn to traditions would not, at least at first, seem an answer to value pluralism and relativism, for as MacIntyre makes clear, there are a diversity of traditions, each with its own table of values and concep-

"A BRILLIANT WORK."
—FRED BARNES, *The Weekly Standard*



"This fascinating account of bin Laden's war against America illustrates the murky world of Islamic extremism and state-sponsored terrorism. I strongly recommend it."
—JEANE J. KIRKPATRICK

"A readable and thoroughly researched account of a man and a movement, both deeply hostile to our way of life and to U.S. influence in the world. It is a first-rate study."
—HELLE BERING-JENSEN, editorial page editor, *Washington Times*

FORUM ▪ An Imprint of Prima Publishing
www.primapublishing.com

AVAILABLE AT BOOKSTORES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of rationality. Indeed, the bulk of *Whose Justice?* is devoted to describing three such traditions: the Aristotelian, which developed out of the life of the Greek city-states and ran from Homer through Plato to Aristotle; the Augustinian, which extended from the Bible through Augustine and culminated in St. Thomas's reconciliation of Christianity with Aristotle; and the Scottish moral tradition, which combined elements of Calvinist Augustinianism and Renaissance Aristotelianism.

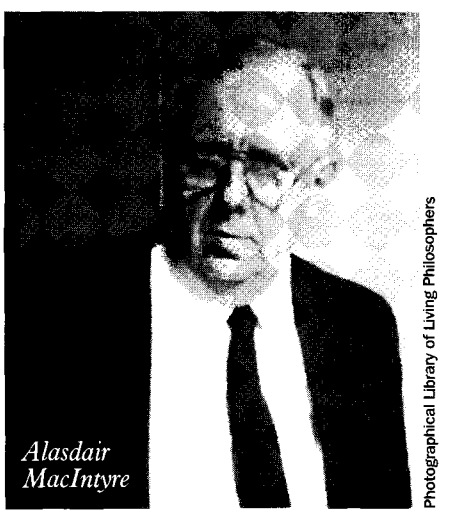
But "the rationality of traditions," at least according to MacIntyre, does not end, as the liberal Enlightenment did, in an unresolvable clash of values. When traditions come in conflict, at least the best of them have ways of settling differences. One is the ability of a person working within the standpoint of his own tradition to enter into the perspective of his antagonist. This requires, according to MacIntyre, the "rare gift of empathy," best exemplified by St. Thomas's ability to enter into the Aristotelian tradition. In *Whose Justice?* MacIntyre declared himself a partisan of the Thomistic tradition, and in his subsequent book, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, he attempts to show how the Thomistic tradition can defeat its two main rivals: the liberal Enlightenment and postmodernism.

While MacIntyre's turn to Thomism is to be welcomed, and his Thomistic engagement with postmodernism is nothing less than brilliant, there are some troubling aspects to his analysis.

The first has to do with his conception of tradition, which leads him to call the conservative hero Edmund Burke "an agent of positive harm," for divorcing tradition from reflection. For MacIntyre, a tradition is "an argument extended through time" among its internal and external critics. But if traditions are the stuff of rational reflection, it's not hard to see why some commentators have claimed that MacIntyre skates near the edge of relativism.

MacIntyre argues that the great philosophers were not engaged in "a single debate with a relatively unvarying subject-matter," and he is critical of those who would divorce Kant from the history of Prussia or Hume from his Scottish ancestry. Rather, says MacIntyre, thought is conditioned by culture: "Doctrines, theses, and arguments all have to be understood in terms of historical context"; even "rationality itself, whether theoretical or practical, is a concept with a history." His claim that there is not one type of rationality, but many historical types, earned him the tag of "honorary woman" from one gender feminist. (She later retracted the intended compliment when she discovered that MacIntyre was no longer a politically correct author.)

The matter of MacIntyre's purported relativism aside, a more telling problem



Alasdair MacIntyre

Photographical Library of Living Philosophers

is his root-and-branch antagonism towards the liberal tradition, which dates back to his Marxist past, runs through *After Virtue*, and is present to this day. In a remarkable piece written in the late 1950s, he criticized ex-Stalinists who had turned to liberalism for having "done no more than exchange one dominant pattern of thought for another." In his view, "the moral attitude" of the Stalinist-turned-liberal was hardly different from that of the unrepentant Stalinist. And over twenty years later, when he came to write *After Virtue*, he still held that Marxism was not an alternative to liberalism but one of its offshoots. Similarly, the "Nietzschean stance" turns out to be "one more representative moment in [liberal individualism's] internal unfolding." Thus communism and fascism were not the great rivals of liberal democracy but mere variations on a common theme.

A greater lack of empathy for liberalism would be hard to find. And it is all the more surprising given two of MacIntyre's fundamental claims. He insists that one must imaginatively enter into a tradition in order to understand, let alone criticize, it, which should hold true for his own look at the tradition of liberalism. But he also claims that the tradition of liberalism is not readily understood, that, in fact, the history of the liberal tradition hasn't been written yet. Nonetheless, MacIntyre still finds it possible to reject all of liberalism. MacIntyre did take a stab at confronting the liberal tradition in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, but rather than taking up liberalism's best arguments, he settled for arguing against the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which dates back to 1880, hardly liberalism's most persuasive spokesman.

His understanding of liberalism seems to be most informed by what passes for liberalism in academia—in other words, the arid and amoral and soul-deadening philosophies of Rawls, Dworkin, Ackerman, and the like. He is surely right to conclude that these are bankrupt thinkers, who by means of their considerable influence on the courts and elites impose their false neutrality on law and social policy. He is also right to note that the emotivist human type is to some extent characteristic of our modern condition. But before fully agreeing with MacIntyre, we inhabitants of modern liberal regimes might consider, as MacIntyre has not, the moral resources within our own liberal tradition, including its greatest founders, statesmen, and poets.

Additional problems arise with MacIntyre's more practical proposals. He opposes the sort of liberal education in Great Books that began with Robert Hutchins at the University of Chicago and that William Bennett and others defend today. According to MacIntyre, the Great Books can only be understood within the tradition they belong to and the language they were written in. To view them otherwise is to have, in a sense, liberalized and distorted them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is no such thing, MacIntyre holds, as "Western values" or "the Judeo-Christian tradition." Instead, there are particular traditions each with its own conceptions of justice and rationality. To teach a course that begins with Plato and ends with Nietzsche, or to write a *Book of Virtues*, is to fall into the old liberal trap of universalism and cosmopolitanism. Thus MacIntyre denounces Bennett, and other "self-proclaimed contemporary conservatives," who "turn out in fact to be one more stage in modernity's cultural deformation of our relationship to the past."

That seems unfair, and his own solutions somewhat quixotic. MacIntyre opposes the secular university, first promoted in this country by such enlighteners as Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, with its absence of religious tests for professors. In abolishing such tests, the liberal university thought that it was making way for rational debate. In reality, MacIntyre says, only "a fictitious objectivity" was created, one that favored liberalism and shut out alternative traditions of rational inquiry, such as Thomism. Reinstalling a regime of religious tests, MacIntyre implies, would encourage genuine encounters among the different traditions, each one represented by a university, rather than the pseudo-encounters that he claims occur on the campuses of most universities today. But as Father Richard John Neuhaus wrote, there is something a bit "cavalier" about MacIntyre's proposal. It ignores, as Neuhaus pointed out, that it is the defenders of objectivity who are under assault today and conservative students and professors who are routinely harassed and excluded from the university by the postmodern thought police.

As for MacIntyre's larger political vision, it is not one that has any chance of realization in America (a fact he readily admits). MacIntyre opposes capitalism and has little to say in defense of civil society, insofar as the latter is a creation of liberal modernity. What he recommends is a politics of small local communities that keep their distance from the state and the market economy. It is his sweeping contention "that the political, economic, and moral structures of advanced modernity in this country, as elsewhere, exclude the possibility of realizing any of the worthwhile types of political community which at various times in the past have been achieved."

Perhaps in some post-apocalyptic world that has been devastated by the sort of science-fiction fantasy laid out in *After Virtue*, MacIntyre's political vision will become feasible. That MacIntyre has been of great service to the conservative cause and to all those who fear for our future there can be no doubt, pointing out liberalism's defects and reviving interest in virtue. But for conservatives, here and now, who love their great big extended republic and their Constitution, MacIntyre's politics are at present more than they bargained for. ♦

THE MIND OF A FOUNDER

Making Sense of James Madison

By Gary Schmitt

Modern political analysis tends to transform principles to ideologies and to reduce subtle acts of prudence to mere political calculations. What gets shoved aside in the process is the possibility of statesmanship—the possibility of applying genuine principle to new times, new peoples, and new places. In its place, we seem left with unattractive alternatives: either the hardheaded ideologue incapable of adapting to changed circumstances, or the unprincipled Machiavellian who can reverse course at the drop of a hat.

GARY ROSEN
American Compact
James Madison and the Problem of Founding
Univ. Press of Kansas, 237 pp., $30

Embarrassingly, James Madison, the celebrated "father of the Constitution," seems to fall into the Machiavellian category. Before the Constitution's ratification, Madison was co-leader of the Federalists; after the new government was up and running, Madison became co-founder of the Republican Party, dedicated to reversing the Federalism of the Washington and Adams administrations.

And that was only one of many reversals. A decade after being the chief architect of a powerful federal government, Madison wrote the Virginia Resolutions, one of the principal documents asserting states rights. Originally consumed with the problem of majority tyranny, he later advocated the creation of a national majority coalition. Initially willing to read the Constitution's grant of enumerated powers in relatively broad fashion, Madison later demanded "strict construction" to brake the government's claim to a seemingly unlimited repository of implied powers. On the practical questions of whether the federal government could legitimately establish a national bank, whether it was within its rights to fund internal improvements, and whether it was constitutionally empowered to deviate from free-market principles and actively support the growth of American industry, Madison took, at different times, positions that contradict one another.

Given this record, historians have to climb a steep hill if they want to rescue Madison from the charges of inconsistency and political sophistry. Nevertheless, there have been two notable efforts in recent years to make that climb. Back in 1995, Lance Banning published his *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*, and now Gary

Gary Schmitt is executive director of the Project for the New American Century.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rosen, the associate editor of *Commentary* magazine, has given us *American Compact: James Madison and the Problem of Founding*.

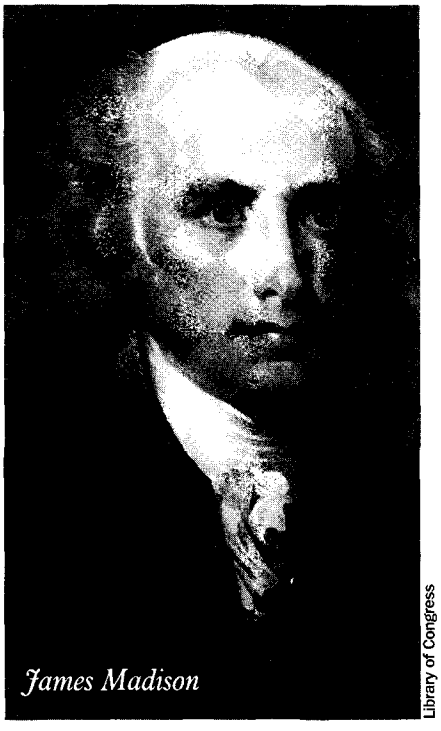
Banning's work showed the virtues of a professional historian. He carefully dissected Madison's earliest positions in an attempt to explain the origins of Madison's later disagreements with the Federalists. The alliance he shared with Hamilton in writing the *Federalist Papers* was temporary and possible because it was focused on the shared but tactical goal of getting a new federal government ratified. More fundamental disagreements were obscured or ignored in the process.

But by focusing on the differences between Madison and Hamilton, Banning underestimated the degree to which both men shared a deep and principled commitment to modern, natural-rights liberalism. As a result, he paid less attention than he might have to the question of how the two, once allies in a campaign to establish a new government capable of securing those rights, could so quickly be at odds when it actually came time to govern.

It is this more difficult and complex question that Gary Rosen picks up in his new and thoughtful study of Madison, and the answer Rosen provides is found in Madison's own thinking about a cornerstone of natural-rights liberalism: the social compact.

According to Rosen, Madison was able to find in Hobbes and Locke an account of the egalitarian origins and ends of the social compact. But what Madison couldn't find in them was an explanation of how a government "of the people" and "for the people" could be established "by the people." Neither Hobbes nor Locke "wrote at any length on the problem of founding or, for that matter, seemed to consider it a problem." Yet, as Madison and others of his generation discovered by trying to craft sound constitutions in the decade following independence, it was an enormously difficult problem.

Liberalism's paradox is that the people do have a right to devise constitutional forms, but only a few actually have the capacity to do so effectively. Madison's answer, according to Rosen, was the invention of the constitutional convention. Brought into being by a sense of crisis, the convention provided the capable few with the conditions necessary for prudent political deliberation. Its product could then be ratified by representatives of the population at large.



James Madison

Library of Congress

Rosen's claim is that Madison's thought on the role of the prudential few in America's founding is the key to understanding the difference between Madison's constitutional politics and those of his Republican ally, Thomas Jefferson—just as it is the key to understanding Madison's break with his one-time Federalist collaborator, Alexander Hamilton. By Madison's lights, Jefferson did not appreciate the role of the few in designing a proper republican government, while Hamilton wanted to extend the role the few had played in founding into actual governing. The former was too sanguine about the politics of foundings, and the latter too pessimistic about normal republican governance. If Jefferson's views dominated, stable and effective government was unlikely to last; and if Hamilton's prevailed, a regime dedicated to equality of rights would be undermined over time.

Madison recognized, Rosen suggests, how rare an event was the American founding: both in placing the prudence of the few in service of popular liberty and in preventing that service from establishing a precedent in day-to-day governance. His "third way" depended on a strict, constructionist reading of the Constitution that could tame popular sovereignty within the forms of republican government. At the same time, strict constructionism would check the ambitions of the few to use creative and broad readings of the Constitution in order to increase government's reach and their own influence.

Rosen's *American Compact* is a thoughtful and often insightful attempt to come to terms with Madison's political thought. It advances our understanding of Madison's reflections on the liberal foundations of government and, in particular, the place of the Constitutional Convention. And it provides new insight into how Madison himself came to understand the broad differences between himself and Jefferson and Hamilton. But Rosen's wish to find that "Madison the theorist vindicates Madison the practitioner" at last stretches his thesis beyond its limits.

There is no question that Madison came to believe that Hamilton had a plan not simply to "perfect" what the Convention had produced but to overturn it with his programs as treasury secretary and with his claim of broad powers for the federal government. (Whether Madison was right, of course, is a different matter.) But Rosen's study does not take us far in explaining why Madison wound up choosing the particular course he did.

For instance, while making much of the differences between Jefferson and Madison on the issue of perpetual refoundings, Rosen takes little substantive note of the equally salient fact that Madison was a full and active partner in Jefferson's efforts to form a political party that (in Harry Jaffa's words) "deliberately recreated the spirit of 1776, with the rhetoric of 1776, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

employed the organizational techniques of 1776." Madison certainly did not have to go as far as he did: There were more moderate Federalist positions—like those held by his fellow Virginian, John Marshall—that could conceivably have satisfied Madison's desire for a political platform more solidly republican than Hamiltonian. But instead, on almost every major division of his day, Madison substantially changed course.

Paradoxically, Madison could do so without flatly contradicting his past positions. As Madison had explained while he was still a Federalist, the American Constitution was a mix of principles: It was partly national and partly federal; it had enumerated powers and yet implied powers; it was a representative government but not simply so; it encouraged a multiplicity of factions and yet ultimately promised majority rule. It was a form of republican government whose stability and energy were rooted in elements that were not fully democratic.

Given this mixture, the later Madison could, as a Republican, challenge Hamilton and the Federalists by reversing the emphasis he had previously given each. So, if the new government had become too nationalist in his mind, then its federal aspect could be emphasized. Or, if he thought the current problem was the machinations of a minority, then the majoritarian aspects of the government's rule could be stressed instead.

But the fact that Madison did not flatly contradict himself should not obscure the real and significant reversal in the direction of his politics. This was not a subtle change of emphasis on Madison's part. The question thus remains, why did Madison undertake such a significant shift? For all its insights into Madison's political thought, Rosen's *American Compact* still leaves us wondering about the character of Madison and his statesmanship. ♦

Crossover Strips

Changing Places on the Comics Page

By Michael Taube

It hardly matters where you go. In newspapers across the continent—from the *Bangor Daily News* to the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, the *Seattle Times* to the *Miami Herald*—there appear on the inside pages ten, twenty, even thirty comic strips. The *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* may survive without them, but most papers find comic strips a vital feature—and sometimes a mainstay of reader loyalty.

It's a curious phenomenon, when you think about it, these little picture stories stacked on top of one another, each a separate universe of narrative and character. Instead of stepping one frame over into the next panel of Charles Schulz's *Peanuts*, why can't Charlie Brown step one frame down into Garry Trudeau's *Doonesbury*? How come Garfield never strays into *Dilbert*? I've always thought Prince Valiant is just what's missing in *Cathy*, and *Apartment 3-G* would be much improved by a visit from Dennis the Menace.

This spring, a pair of popular Canadian cartoonists decided to do something about comic-strip atomism. Who says that each narrative universe is inviolable? What prevents comic-strip crossover? And so, between April 26 and May 1—in the pages of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, a major newspaper in Canada—the comic strips *Fisher* and *Back Bench* intermingled stories for the paper's surprised readers. A character from Philip Street's *Fisher*, which looks at the problems of yuppies and Generation X, found himself in Graham Harrop's *Back Bench*, which looks at political life in the House of Commons in Ottawa. At the same time, the characters in *Fisher* read about this strange voyage in a newspaper in the company of a *Back Bench* character.

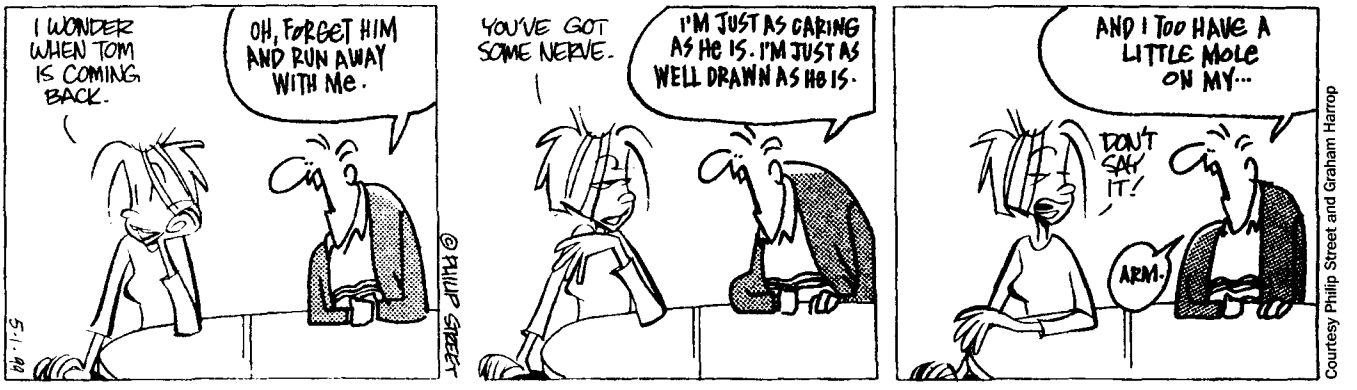
This is not, however, the first time in the history of comic strips that characters have crossed the boundaries of their respective realities. One significant historical crossover occurred in 1921, between the Dutch *Bulletje en Bonestaak* ("Fatty and Beanstalk") of the socialist newspaper *Het Volk* and the British *Jopie Slim and Dickie Bigmans* of the *London Evening News*. Bulletje and his constant companion Bonestaak, who traveled the world in search of adventure, met up with the English duo—but only in the Dutch papers. As the comics specialist Wolfgang Fuchs notes, the crossover was probably never mentioned in Britain.

Then too, there was *Sam's Strip*, called the "comic fan's comic strip" by Maurice Horn in his *The World Encyclopedia of Comics*. Started by Mort Walker (creator of *Beetle Bailey* and *Hi & Lois*) and Jerry Dumas in 1961, the strip brought all the classic cartoon characters together at a never-ending series of conventions, offering such peculiar possibilities as a conversation between Pogo and Krazy Kat.

The matching of Michael Jordan and Bugs Bunny in the 1996 movie *Space Jam* was only the most recent in a long series of attempts to unite live action with animation—including the famous dance scene between Gene Kelly and Jerry the Mouse in the 1945 *Anchors Aweigh*. Perhaps the most impressive attempt at mixing live characters with cartoons, however, was the 1988 *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, which was as well a massive example of crossover. Characters from hundreds of old newspaper comics, comic books, and animated cartoons gathered in a magical land called Toon Town. The film included such scenes as Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse and Warner Brothers' Bugs Bunny skydiving together, and the piano duet between Donald Duck and Daffy Duck

Michael Taube is a columnist for the Moncton Times & Transcript *in Canada.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



A character from Graham Harrop's political satire Back Bench *flirts with a character in Philip Street's* Fisher, *May 1, 1999.*

stands as one of the great animation achievements of all time.

But there was an element in the combination of *Fisher* and *Back Bench* that made the Canadian crossover a novelty, for rarely before had newspaper cartoonists collaborated on one another's strips. The combined work of artists in comic books is quite common. In 1996, DC Comics and Marvel Comics, the publishing giants of the industry, had a well-publicized four-issue crossover series. Major characters of both companies fought against one another for control of the universe, offering stirring battles between Superman and the Incredible Hulk, Batman and Captain America, and Green Lantern and Silver Surfer.

But most newspaper cartoonists simply don't have the time. It's hard enough to draw a daily pen-and-ink strip as well as a weekend color strip with their own characters. *Fisher*'s Street (who lives in Toronto) and *Back Bench*'s Harrop (who lives in Vancouver) took almost a year of phone calls and faxes to pull off their collaboration.

In the end, they decided each cartoonist would draw his own panels, leaving a space open in each strip for the other's submission. When I reached Harrop for comment, he was quick to give Street credit for the idea. Mentioning his excitement at seeing his own work appear in another strip, Harrop noted that it was a complicated procedure and admitted that he was nervous about how the final product would look. Street observed that the fact that both comic strips are exclusive to the *Globe and Mail* gave readers "a special feeling towards them" that helped them identify the visiting characters.

The irony of the comic-strip crossover lies in its proof that even those little atomistic narrative universes stacked on the comic pages of the newspapers can have their illusions—that even fantasy worlds can have their fantasies. And the successful collaboration of Street and Harrop proves that the logistical problems are not insurmountable; all it takes is a little extra dollop of creativity from newspaper cartoonists. My own fantasies include seeing Garfield holding a football for Charlie Brown and the liberal cast of *Doonesbury* discussing politics with the conservative cast of *Mallard Fillmore*. That would be something really worth reading—from Bangor to San Diego, Seattle to Miami. ♦

HORROR SHOWS

The New Gross-Out Movie Comedies

By John Podhoretz

Hollywood comedies have been undergoing a bizarre metamorphosis in the past few years: They are turning into horror films. You cannot watch them without, at some point, covering your eyes in anxiety and fear that the next image you see will upset, disgust, or terrify you. Right now, there are four such movies showing: *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*; *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*; *Big Daddy*; and *American Pie*. Each of them is punctuated by scenes that are purposefully, stomach-churningly repulsive, with imagery more akin to nightmares than comedies.

A contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *John Podhoretz is editorial-page editor of the* New York Post.

What can be said about a movie like *Austin Powers*, in which a man holds a beaker full of human feces and unknowingly drinks from it? Or one like *American Pie*, in which a teenage boy, again unknowingly, quaffs a beer laced with human semen? Or an animated feature about four little boys like *South Park*, in which Saddam Hussein sodomizes Satan?

The sounds audiences make as they sit through these scenes are indicative of how similar they are to the gross-out horror movies that were all the rage in the late 1970s and 1980s. As a scene builds and an audience realizes that something really repulsive is about to happen, the audience emits low moans, nervous titters, even an "Oh no" or two before the scene reaches its climax. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

entire audience screams—and then dissolves into relieved laughter.

That response—terror followed by giggles—is exactly the same sort of thing that happened to an audience when a shark slammed into Richard Dreyfuss's cage in *Jaws*, or when the masked boogeyman showed up behind a half-closed door in *Halloween*, or when Sissy Spacek's hand suddenly emerged from her grave to grab Amy Irving at the end of *Carrie*. The laughter that follows these shocks is involuntary, though it is accompanied by a rueful acknowledgment that you've been had. You laugh in part because you realize that you're only watching a movie; the terrifying things you're seeing aren't real. You're comforted by that knowledge, and you feel a little silly because you fell for it.

But in recent years, audiences have come to mistake that horrified laughter for the delighted laughter that comes in response to genuine comic imagination of the sort on display in a magnificent new French farce called *The Dinner Game*. In *The Dinner Game*, an arrogant and intelligent publisher has his entire life destroyed and then put back together by a really stupid but well-meaning fellow, all in the course of a single evening. The humor grows entirely out of a brilliantly conceived situation that places unexpected obstacles in front of two flawed people and then follows them as they try to clean up the mess they are making.

The publisher wants to bring the stupid guy to a weekly dinner where he and some fellow Paris intellectuals compete to see who can bring the most laughable guest. The idiot's peculiar distinction is that he is obsessed with making models out of matchsticks, and can go on for hours about how it took 366,000 of them to make his version of the Eiffel Tower. To entice the idiot to dinner, the publisher says he wants to edit a book about the matchstick models. But the publisher throws his back out on the golf course and is immobile when the idiot comes to meet him at his fancy apartment. In the next few hours, the publisher learns his wife has left him and the idiot tries to help him get her back, with truly comic results.

Francis Veber, who wrote and directed *The Dinner Game*, understands the classic principle that comedy is about what human beings are like when they are at their worst. The movie has plenty of sport with the idiot, who is as dumb and boring as you could imagine, but it's the publisher's vanity and false sense of superiority that really get skewered. He's humiliated, but he deserves it.

Humiliation is the primary subject of most gross-out comedies, but all too often the characters who get humiliated *don't* deserve it. The central character in the witless teen comedy *American Pie* is a perfectly nice boy named Jim who is repeatedly, almost ritualistically, the subject of awful sexual humiliations every ten minutes. The movie invites the audience to take sadistic pleasure in Jim's brutalization. In *The Dinner Game*, you enjoy the publisher's humiliation because it seems like divine justice. But *American Pie* turns the audience into bullies who laugh as they beat up a weaker, defenseless kid and pull his pants down in front of the entire school.

Paramount Pictures / Viacom

The movie that inaugurated the new spate of gross-out comedies was last year's *There's Something About Mary*, which was remarkably disgusting but so clever and inventive that it seemed almost Rabelaisian. But its seemingly endless series of I-can't-believe-I'm-watching-this scenes have lowered the bar for the comedies that have followed it. A year before *There's Something About Mary*, Mike Myers's *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* poked gentle fun at the dated double entendres and supposedly risqué sexual content of the spy movies of the 1960s. A year after *There's Something About Mary*, the sequel to *Austin Powers* shows coprophagy and makes jokes about child molestation.

By far the most appalling and outrageous of the new gross-out comedies is the movie version of the cartoon show *South Park*. Most of its gags and images cannot even be described without going beyond the bounds of civilized discourse. It's sexually explicit, blasphemous, and even has traces of anti-Semitism. The fact that two major motion picture studios thought it was acceptable for release—and that its creators, Trey Parker and Matt Stone, have had the gall to complain about the film's R rating—is a mark of astonishing social irresponsibility.

Yet honesty compels me to admit that *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* is uproarious. And that may be the most appalling fact of all. Parker and Stone are possessors of a genuine comic imagination. What they lack is any kind of elevating sensibility. Parker and Stone are like brilliantly funny four-year-olds. They can make you laugh effortlessly with their clowning. But vomit, excrement, and curse words are what really crack *them* up.

So here's where we are at the end of the millennium: American comedy is the province of a bunch of four-year-olds with tens of millions of dollars at their disposal. Now that's a horror show. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Strikes and Balls

Martinez K's 5, Takes Off Pants, Could Put Men's Sports on Map

By Bob Ryan
GLOBE STAFF

Men's sports will never be the same. "It was a totally spontaneous expression of emotion," said hard-throwing Red Sox right-hander Pedro Martinez. Exhilarated by striking out five of the National League's most powerful sluggers in yesterday's All-Star game, Martinez tore off his regulation baseball trousers and gamboled about the infield in front of 33,000 cheering spectators at Fenway Park.

Martinez raised spirits—and not a few eyebrows—as he introduced the country to a new article of clothing that he designed himself, with the help of 37 marketing executives at Nike: the Miracle Jock.

"For me, the jockstrap sends a message of male empowerment," Martinez says. "It's a sign that we can be comfortable with our bodies."

Male politicians were quick to agree. "You just look at the guy out there and say, 'I want one of those,'" said Viagra spokesman and former presidential candidate Bob Dole, in the stands for the game.

While analysts warn that it's too early to tell, public reaction to Martinez could be a sign that men's professional sports may at last be gaining an initial, if precarious, toehold in the American consciousness.

The First Lady, who cut short a tour of upstate New York to greet both teams in their locker rooms, was caught up in the moment. "He looked really excited," Mrs. Clinton beamed, a distant look in her eye. But she warned of a continuing glass ceiling under which men who take off their clothes earn only 69 cents for every dollar that wo-

(See HARD PRESSED TO DISAGREE, p. C8)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"To most American eyes, these look like poverty neighborhoods, but this is the snapshot view; in the video version

they are the first frames on the way to prosperity,

the first way-station on the Santa Ana and San Bernardino Freeways to middle-income American comfort."

—*The Almanac of American Politics* on California's 30th Congressional District in Los Angeles.

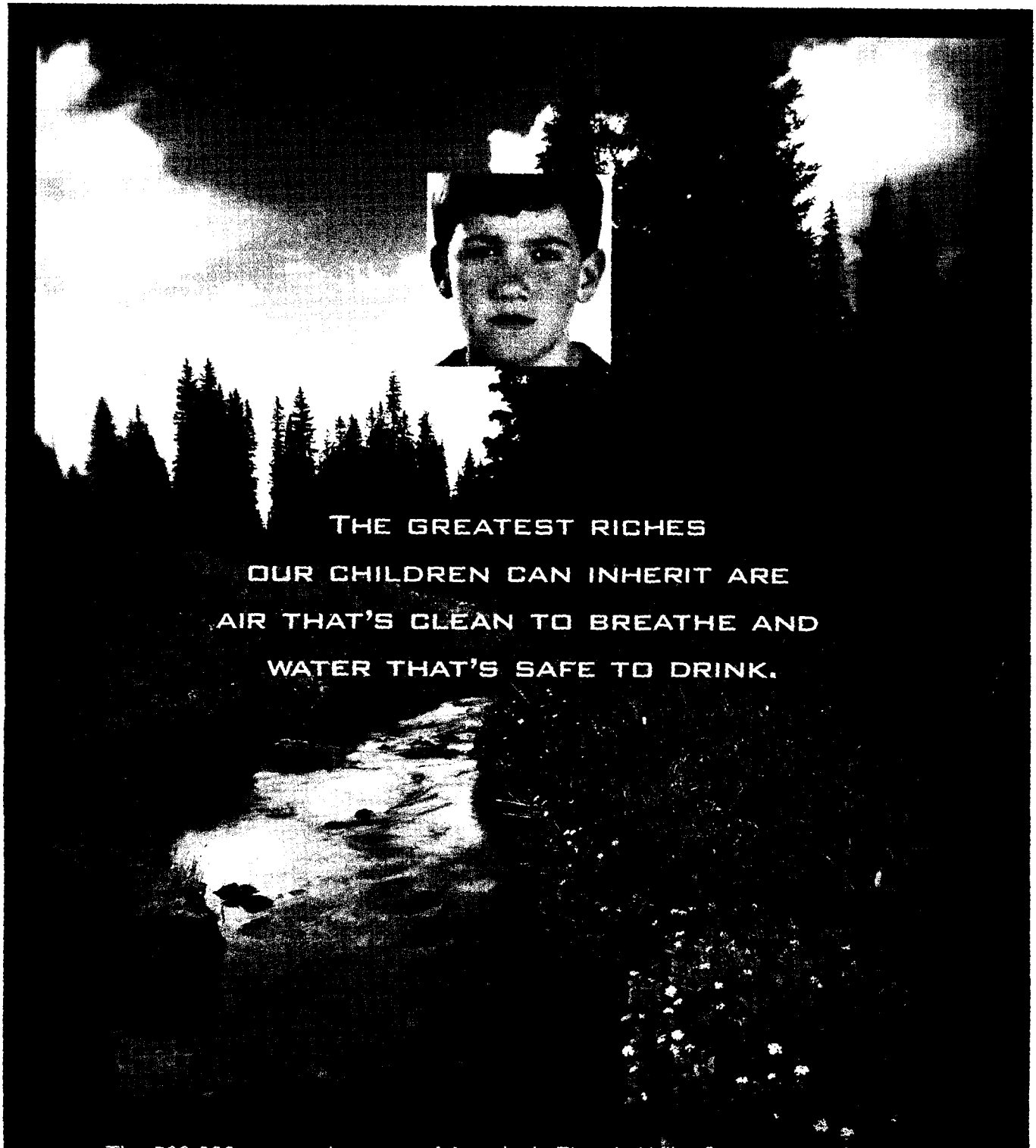
The Almanac of American Politics 2000

Everything you need to know about American politics, including the big picture.

With National Journal's *The Almanac of American Politics 2000*, you get more than snapshots of politicians. You get an understanding of what makes them tick. Michael Barone's first-hand analysis of every state, governor and member of Congress mixes hard facts with a true-to-life feel for the people, places and perceptions that shape American politics. Get the big picture in moving detail. **To order your copy, call us toll free at 1-800-356-4838 or visit www.nationaljournal.com/almanac**

National Journal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The 500,000 men and women of America's Electric Utility Companies take great pride in generating electricity more cleanly and efficiently than ever before. And we're furthering partnerships and projects that promote the use of renewable energy. To learn more about our environmental programs, and new ways you can use electricity wisely, visit our website (www.eei.org/enviro/). Together, we can make our children's future that much richer.

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPANIES

©1998, by the Edison Electric Institute. All rights reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED